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BIOGRAPHY

OF

ZADOCK PRATT,

OF

PRATTSVILLE, N. Y.

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED

A PORTION OF HIS ADDRESSES, LETTERS, CONGRESSIONAL
REPORTS AND SPEECHES.

NATURE ENDOWED HER VIGOROUS CHILD
WITH STRENGTH TO DO AND DARE ;
HE SPREAD HIS TENT IN THE HEMLOCK WILD,
AND RAISED A CITY THERE.



DEDICATION.

TO

THE CITIZENS

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This Volume

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE EDITOR.

P R E F A C E .

IN presenting to the public the Life, Character, and Opinions of ZADOCK PRATT, we feel that we shall have a cordial welcome from the practical tanner, farmer, banker and legislator, — to say nothing of the man who honors the noble friend and generous citizen.

But few men have been more blessed in health, mind and estate, than Colonel Pratt, of Prattsville. His labors have been directed with skill, and their fruits have been those of affluence and practical usefulness. What others have only hoped for he has accomplished; and what most men have promised he has done. He was the builder of his own model, as well as the maker of his own fortune.

His examples of success, of private virtue, public spirit, cheerful temper, and philanthropic zeal, are fraught with too many important considerations to be either neglected or concealed. They belong to the world. They constitute a rich legacy for the rising generations of our country, and his name will long be asso-

ciated with the spirit of honorable enterprise,—illustrating with irresistible force the power of simple duty in developments of industry, skill and integrity.

It is a favorite maxim of his that *the business of life is to be useful*, — and it may be truly affirmed that few men ever succeeded more fully in illustrating this noble sentiment.

It is but proper to remark that Col. Pratt is still in the vigor of youth. He is happy in active labors, and though relieved by partners from the details of business, he frequently visits his tanneries in New York and Pennsylvania, to see that they do not depart from his well-tried “landmarks.” On these occasions, he rides his favorite gray horse, sometimes forty miles after dinner, without suffering the slightest inconvenience from fatigue, using a saddle and bridle made by himself thirty years ago, and accompanied by “ROUGH” and “TANNER,” two magnificent dogs, which usually attend his excursions.

PART SECOND embraces his Addresses and Letters, on a variety of topics, and some of his Congressional Reports and Speeches. They are eminently practical and suggestive in their character, and require no editorial commendation to insure them a just appreciation.

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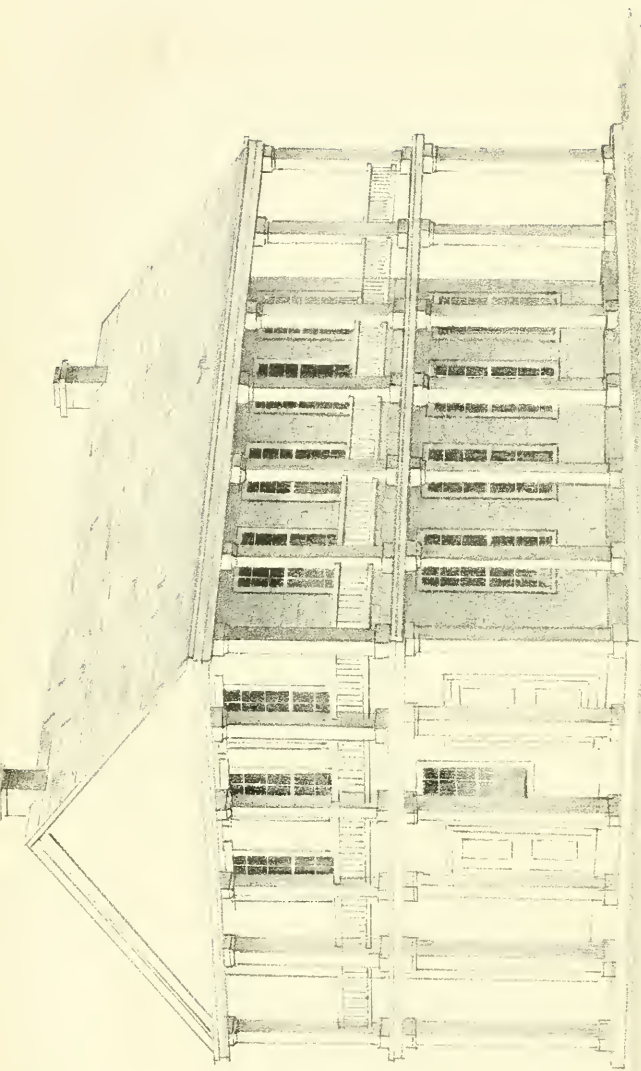
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PRATTSVILLE ACADEMY.

BIOGRAPHY.

INTRODUCTORY.

To the world, the life of a practical man is knowledge ; of an honest man, freedom ; of a generous man, persuasion ; of a great man, character.

What a man thinks is theory ; what he does, example. To do well is wisdom ; to do ill, folly. Success comes from right thinking and well doing ; and continued security alone comes from perseverance in both of these.

The moral world is to man essentially a world of causes ; and there is no duty fraught with more permanent benefits than that of pointing out the origin and result of the acts and conditions of men. This remark is not applicable alone to one class of men, — such as have distinguished themselves by extraordinary acts on remarkable occasions, — but may be extended to all classes that contribute to the advancement of the great cause of humanity. Man, considered as an individual, is a being of great diversity of power. He is endowed with intellectual fac-

ulties, which discern, compare and reason ; and which, by the force of their inherent nature, explore the unseen regions of thought, truth and science. He has perceptive powers, which look out upon the external world, and appreciate the architecture of all created things, in their localities, uses, and array of native beauty. He is blessed with sentiments which exalt, dignify and refine his wants and wishes ; and is swayed by those elements of passion, which, though they sometimes impel him to do the work of war and desolation, impart energy to will, firmness to his consciousness of duty, and promptness to action. Placed, as he ever has been and ever will be, in the diversified relations of power, possession and want, of enjoyment and suffering, of hope and fear, of wealth and indigence, of industry and indolence, of skill and inefficiency, of prudence and prodigality, of success and failure, of justice and cupidity, of integrity and faithlessness, of patriotism and treason, — man is influenced, on the one hand, by countless motives to do right ; and, on the other, he is beset by innumerable temptations to do wrong. He is saved either by the wisdom of experience, or by the love which he bears to goodness, for the sake of its blessings. He is lost either by a reckless indulgence in passion which invites temptation that he cannot withstand, or falls by neglecting the means of knowledge, and the teachings of experience. To fail in duty, implies ignorance of moral causes ; to fail of success in enterprise, implies a want of practical knowledge.

It is a common error to suppose that biography is useful only when applied to extraordinary men. We refer to men such as Washington, Franklin, Newton, Napoleon, Cuvier, La Place, Kant, Luther, Calvin, Huss, who may be denominated the representative men of nations, of reforms, of revolutions. They make up a portion of the world's history ; and all their genius and strength have been applied either to the momentous affairs of government, to reforms, or to the sublime developments of science. They have mastered, in their time, the great subjects which involved the interests of an age, or of a generation ; but, in the duties incumbent upon a citizen in all the walks of private life, or in the higher demands of public duty, they have furnished no more examples to be noted for the study of posterity than can be found scattered throughout the civilized world, in every society, in every class, profession and condition.

In this view of the subject we are confirmed by the strongly expressed opinions of that giant thinker, Dr. Johnson, who says :

“ I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful. For, not only every man has, in the mighty mass of the world, great numbers, in the same condition with himself, to whom his mistakes and miscarriages, escapes and expedients, would be of immediate and apparent use ; but there is such a uniformity in the state of man, considered apart from adventitious and separable decorations and disguises, that there is scarce any possi-

bility of good or ill but is common to human kind. A great part of those who are placed at the greatest distance by fortune or by temper must unavoidably pass in the same manner; and though, when the claims of nature are satisfied, caprice, and vanity, and accident, begin to produce discriminations and peculiarities, yet the eye is not very heedful or quick which cannot discover the same causes still terminating their influence in the same effects, though sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, or perplexed by multiplied combinations. We are prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure.

“It is frequently objected to relations of particular lives, that they are not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes. The scholar, who passed his life among his books, — the merchant, who conducted his own affairs, — the priest, whose sphere of action was not extended beyond that of his duty, — are considered as no proper objects of public regard, however they might have excelled in their several stations, whatever might have been their learning, integrity and piety. But this notion arises from false measures of excellence and dignity; and must be eradicated by considering that, in the esteem of uncorrupted reason, what is of most use is of most value.”

All must be deeply impressed with the truthfulness of this language. Whatever is of the most use *must be of the most value*. But few men can enjoy the special privileges of genius, of patriotism; for many generations are

permitted to pass without signal opportunities for men to distinguish themselves, either as philosophers or as patriots. Humanity does not afford to every generation a brilliant genius to astonish the world; nor is it the lot of nations to be made the subjects of revolution so frequently as to give birth, by opportunity, to a numerous band of heroes. Great events transpire but seldom; and however full of interest they may be regarded, they are unquestionably of less consequence, and convey less instruction, to the great masses of the people, than the ordinary occurrences which fall within the circle of every year, of every season.

HESIOD, in his distribution of mankind, *divides them into three orders of intellect*. “The first place,” says he, “belongs to him that can by his own powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him who is willing to hear instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shown him by another; but he who has neither acuteness nor docility — who can neither find the way by himself, nor will be led by others — is a wretch without use or value.”

Perhaps but few would make any exception to the distribution of HESIOD, unless it were to the dismissal of the third class to utter oblivion. However numerous may be the classes, it will appear obvious, we think, that the differences are those of degree rather than of kind, as applied both to power and knowledge.

To blend sentiment with intellect, or propensity with

sentiment, is certainly an error which leads to much confusion. A man may know the right *theoretically*, and yet have no conscience *practically* to deter him from the wrong. He may have strong aspirations for duty, and yet too little judgment and resolution to protect him from the influence of evil counsellors. He may have sufficient intellect to favor the highest demands of the soul, but not enough for the prompt and successful execution of its purposes. Mind without motive, motive without energy, or propensity without intellect or sentiment, are defective conditions, and, properly speaking, cannot be regarded as in harmony with the natural laws. We would rather dwell upon that harmonious adjustment of the mental faculties which is favorable to the manifestations of plain common sense. The true standard is the *medium* standard of the world. In this respect, what is true of happiness proves true of character. "The maxim of Cleobulus the Lindian, that *mediocrity is best*," says Dr. Johnson, "has been considered as a universal principle, extended through the whole compass of life and nature." This is no position of mere logic,—it is one of fact. The wants of men are similar and common. They are supplied by ordinary and obvious means, within the reach of all. What is vitally important, all have an interest in understanding. Whoever has participated most in the common affairs of life,—whoever has done the most to meet the wants of the many, and to point out the numerous sources of comfort and success,—whoever has averted and relieved the most suffering, prevented the

most wrong, exhibited the best examples of duty, taught the greatest amount of knowledge of common things to common people, — is a subject above all others for that biography which promises and establishes the most good for the greatest number.

We are told by TACITUS that it was the practice of Roman authors, in the early periods of the republic, to record the lives and characters of illustrious men. The example has been followed in other countries. But the class of illustrious men, so termed, in all times, has been a limited one. Emperors, kings, warriors, law-givers, occupy most of the volumes devoted to illustrious men. Their deeds may have been those of courage, self-denial, and patriotism, in seasons of extraordinary trial and danger ; and it is right, it is patriotic, that the sun of glory should shine around them, and ennoble their memory. We would not neglect the heroes, the choice spirits of reform, and of defence against tyranny, — for such are to be honored and revered ; but we claim that there is another class quite as much entitled to distinction, and, in regard to posterity, holding positions quite as honorable. If biography is to be valued for the good it may do, then it is not difficult to distinguish between examples of success and of failure. The history of Newton is valuable to the scholar in so far as he learns what are the habits which favor study and proficiency in science. The history of Napoleon is prized by the general, or by the statesman, just so far as his experience serves him for guidance in the proper execution of his

plans, for direction in his peculiar researches. The noble career of Washington is a living example to the illustrious of all nations, teaching the true objects and ends of patriotism, and rebuking the eminent selfishness of rulers. Although we would not presume to limit the wide influence of such exemplars, still, it would be injudicious to claim that we are to look to such as guides in the ordinary affairs of life. Indeed, it may be truly said, that the examples of the great are made to bless the rising generations only as they are taught with prudence by the humble mother, the ambitious father, or the public teacher. What is truly great is worthy to be recorded; what is truly useful is worthy to be taught; but a small matter in a great man is surely not so worthy to be noted as a useful matter in a common man.

Wherein is the moral profit of the assurance of Sallust, *that CATILINE sometimes walked quick, and sometimes slow*? Who is likely to be a better man by being told that Cæsar scratched his head with one finger, or that the pulse of Addison was irregular? Who cares to know that Scaliger's father sold herrings for a profit, or that Montaigne was really a lover of white wines?

The little things of great men are preserved for posterity, though they signify nothing, and benefit no one; while the biographer has not condescended to notice deeds of merit, which, though of humble origin, may have proved to be the source of much physical comfort, or of unmeasurable happiness.

The world is filled with the events of duty and of dis-

obedience ; and into two great classes, corresponding to these two heads, may all mankind be placed. However else the deeds of men may be characterized, it is certain that all will concede this simple distinction. No one will doubt its justice, though many may repel its application. The sphere of action assigned by the standard of duty to every individual of the race, however distinguished or however humble, has its greater and its less important requisitions.

Ambition has its pompous train of aspirants, earnest only for control and fame, and is regardless of those mis-termed *minor virtues*, which, combined, are sufficient to redeem the world from hopeless desolation. Fashion, with her fantastic trumpeters and parasitical throng, seeks but the favor that glistens in her rocket-like sun, and dwells nowhere long in her dizzy whirl. The proud man, in the vain glory of pretension, swayed by titles, ancestry, or appearances, thinks less of duty than of pedigree. The slave of wealth, that tyrant of the soul, whose degrading bolts and gilded chains hold so many men from truth and duty, lives like the worm in its slime, creeping but to devour, living but to die. The envious and the malicious, with their sullen side-glances, and bitter resolves, live on the venom engendered by falsehood, and rejoice only in the death-struggles of innocence. The idle and the reckless, borne upon the waves of circumstance, move heedlessly along in the storms of life, offering no protection to others, and meriting none for themselves. The robber and the

profligate join hands against society, and become willing travellers in the broad road of infamy and destruction. How numerous, indeed, how numberless, are the examples of wrong and of disobedience! We find them in every rank of society, in all conditions. Their lot is one to sadden the souls of all good men; and we hasten to look upon that other picture, which is the sunshine of life, *the simple love of duty*.

It comes from an honest and humble spirit, — exempt from pride and selfishness. It reaches out a helping hand to the weak, to the indigent, and to the suffering. It honors industry by practising its requisitions, and acquires riches that it may subserve the best good of men. It seeks distinction that it may become the dispenser of honors to the just, and the conservator of the faithful. It visits the bed of the humble hut with the same zeal that it responds to the welcome of the palace. Its pride and ambition are based upon the highest purposes of the soul, and its deeds are those which add wealth to a country, purity to character, happiness to man, and glory to a nation.

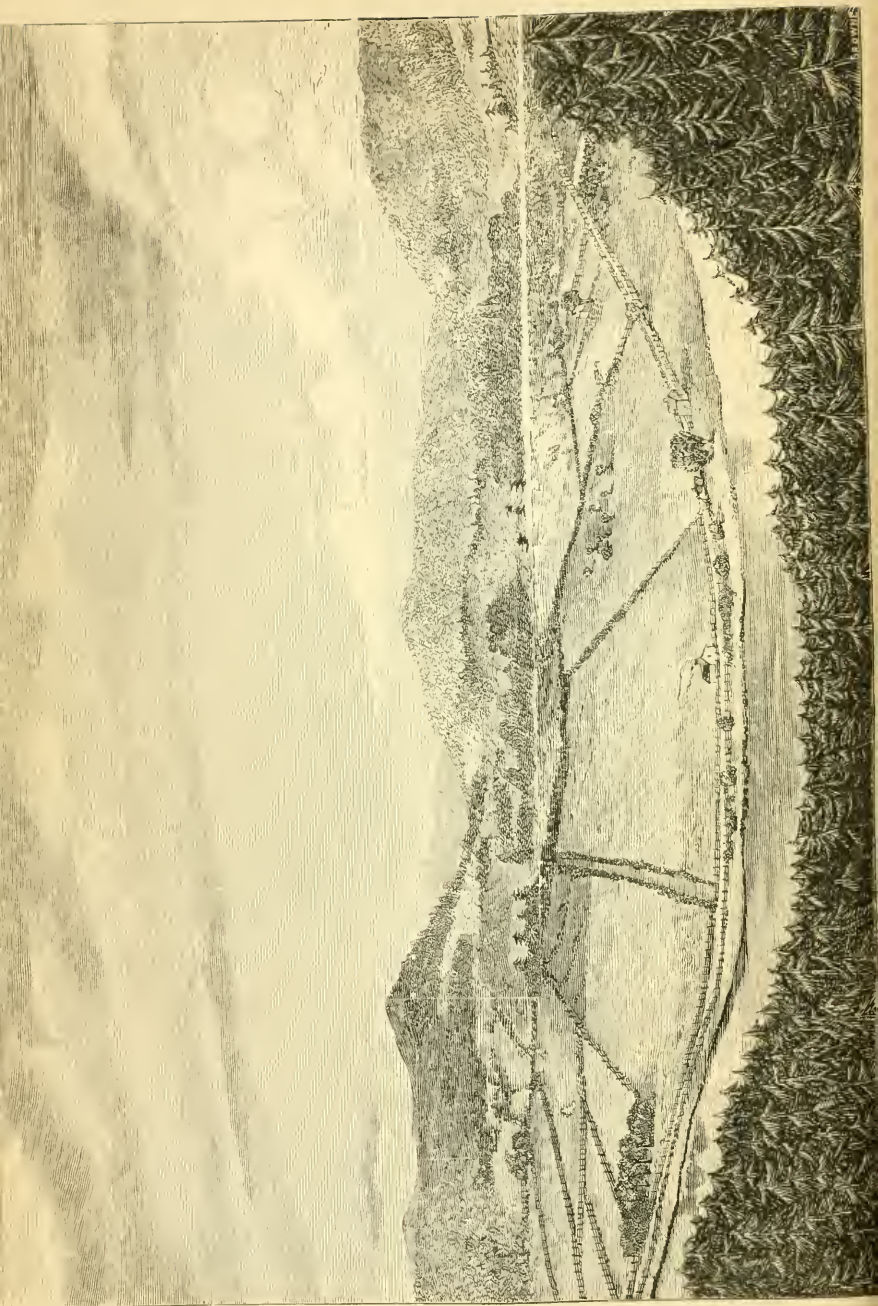
It is the glory of the moral world that all power of every denomination is made subservient to the beneficent designs of Deity, and that character based upon the eternal principles of truth and justice has its permanent position of influence to reform and to advance the great interests of society. The evil which men do is temporary; and whoever is a true observer will heed and avoid its repetition, and its inevitable penalties. It stands in

the path-way of the man, as the rock in the track of the mariner, — a beacon to be dreaded and avoided. It is the good alone which abides the test of time, and carries forward on the wings of truth the vitality which is to embody the wisdom of the past, and be the seed of future growth and greatness. Moral progress is not abandoned to chance processes, to events which come from accident. It is the condition of actual existence, the divinity that gives birth to profitable thought and useful action. The ancients found it in such spirits as those of Plato, Socrates, Lycurgus, and Aristides. At later periods, we find a Columbus, a Sebastian Castalio, a Prideaux, a Linnæus, a Hunter, a Bacon. And later still, we are led to contemplate the genius of a Cuvier and a Fulton, the patriotism of a Washington and a Lafayette, and the wisdom and strength of a Johnson, a Franklin, and a Spurzheim.

To such as these, in all past time, and in all time to come, mankind are and will be indebted for the well-springs of knowledge, for every advancement in power, and for the increased comforts of condition. They are the practical men. They see what is wanted, and they do what is to be done. Their motto is *Res non verba*, and their example is made up of *acts, and not promises*. Such as these are the legitimate subjects of biography. They live to be blessed by their acts, and their good deeds adorn the historic page to bless a grateful world.

We have made these preliminary remarks, that our readers may be induced to study with more than ordi-

nary care the great principles of character, and justly to appreciate the biography of practical men. In adding another subject to the brilliant catalogue of men of genius, we feel that a new source of motive power is opened to the aspiring mind, — that new incentives are furnished to encourage integrity, industry, and exalted philanthropy. We propose to give a plain history of a true man. We do not say *a self-made one*; for this term, so common among writers, in our humble opinion, is an arrogant one. Whoever has the strength and genius to rise above the circumstances of life, to acquire knowledge however opposed by difficulties, to elevate his character above that of his associates, to advance his own station beyond his inherited rank, and to secure for himself the commanding position of affluence, integrity, and eminent usefulness, — is a favored child of his Maker, and is a chosen instrument of his beneficence. The genius that is within raises him above the level of life. He sees, he hears, he feels, he knows, and he acts. He is diligent in the use of his talents, and, like the faithful steward, is ever ready to be called to his account.



CHAPTER I.

Origin of the Pratt family in the United States. — Revolutionary services of Mr. Pratt's father. — Character of parents. — Birth of Zadock Pratt. — His childhood and early life.

THE origin of the Pratt family in America is associated with the earliest settlement of the New England colonies by the Puritans. The first of that name, of whom we have any authentic record, is Phineas Pratt, who came over in Weston's company as early as 1622, settling at Weymouth, but afterwards removed to Plymouth, and finally died at Charlestown. Joshua Pratt came over in 1623, and settled in Plymouth colony.

Subsequently, in 1633, John Pratt, another member of the family, came over to Massachusetts colony, in company with the celebrated Puritan divines, John Cotton and Thomas Hooker. He afterwards, in company with Mr. Hooker and his church, removed to Connecticut, in June, 1636. This journey, though beset by all the hardships and dangers incident to travelling in the early days of New England, was accomplished, without serious adventure or accident, in fourteen days. The same distance now requires less than half that number of hours. From this branch most of the Pratt families in Connecticut are descended.

The little that is positively known of the life and

character of John Pratt represents him to be a man of strong mind, conscious integrity, and of that elevating and energetic purpose which fitted him to be a pioneer in the early adventures of the New England colonies.

Among his descendants was Zadock Pratt, *Senior*, who was born at Saybrook, Connecticut. He was by trade a shoemaker and tanner; and, in addition to these, he cultivated a small farm, as was the custom with mechanics in those days. In his habits he was industrious, frugal and systematic; in his manners, earnest, frank and cheerful; and in his character, honest, patriotic and Christian. Living at a time when the trials of the colonies were approaching their crisis, he manifested that spirit of daring and patriotic devotion for which the period is so distinguished.

When the war of the Revolution broke out, he entered, without hesitation, the service of his country, and was engaged in several of its hard-fought battles, and twice taken prisoner. He was a member of the battalion which, at the defeat on Long Island, was surrendered to the British. In attempting to make his escape, he was captured by a party of Hessians, after having concealed himself for two days among the thickets near the battle-ground. He was afterwards confined in a stone church,* without anything to eat, except some apples, which were thrown him by a kind-hearted

* This stone church was the *Dutch Reformed Church*, corner of Liberty and Nassau streets, now the post-office.

woman. He was finally sent on board the prison-ship *Whitby*, then lying in Wallabout Bay, where he was kept four days without a particle of food, and exposed to insults and sufferings which disgraced civilized warfare. Added to these intentional outrages, he was purposely exposed to the small-pox, with which he was afterwards quite sick. Although he recovered from the disease himself, still he was soon called upon to mourn the loss of a dearly-beloved and only sister, to whom the infectious poison had been communicated.

At length, an exchange having been arranged, he was set at liberty, together with his companions,—not, however, till after a fiendish attempt upon their lives had been made, by offering the almost famished soldiers a poisoned dish of pea-soup, which proved fatal to all who eagerly partook of it. Mr. Pratt, seeing no occasion to confide in those whose conduct towards him had been characterized by nothing but insult and cruelty, distrusted their pretended kindness, and, by refusing their soup, escaped their treachery. It will hardly appear strange that, with such experience, Mr. Pratt should go to his grave with a very keen sense of British injustice.

At the close of the war, Mr. Pratt returned to his former occupation, to enjoy the blessings of that independence which he had helped to establish. He shortly after married Miss Hannah Pickett, a descendant of Dr. Pickett, of New Milford, Connecticut, one of that intrepid band of patriots known as the “BOSTON TEA PARTY.” After his marriage, Mr. Pratt removed to

Stephentown, Rensselaer county, New York, and subsequently to Middleburg, Schoharie county; from thence to Windham, now Jewett.

Previous to his last removal, Mr. Pratt disposed of his small property for six hundred dollars, receiving one hundred dollars in cash, and leaving the remaining five hundred dollars on credit, which he ultimately lost, in consequence of the bankruptcy of the purchaser. He was thus again thrown upon his own resources, in a new country. But his energy and industry were equal to the emergency. With an honesty of purpose that won the confidence of all with whom he had to do, and a perseverance that never faltered, he gradually regained his former condition. About this time, Mr. Abner Hammond, a merchant in that vicinity, sold on credit, to Mr. Pratt, two hundred damaged Spanish hides, which he had purchased during one of his visits to the city of New York. This was a special favor to Mr. Pratt. The trade and tanning of foreign hides had been heretofore entirely unknown in Greene county; and his first experiment proved so successful, that he determined to make it a permanent business, and, as a consequence, soon found himself in easy circumstances.

He died in 1829, at the age of seventy-four. Mrs. Pratt survived her husband only about three years. She died in 1832, in the seventy-fourth year of her age. She was a woman of strong mind, high moral worth, of singular practical piety, and much devoted to the welfare of her family. She used untiring efforts to make

up for the limited means of education which are incident to a new country, by inculcating the highest and purest principles of action, and by training her family in the most correct habits of life ; and she lived to rejoice in the most gratifying results of her teachings, for her children indeed have risen up to call her blessed.*

The family of Mr. Pratt consisted of three sons and four daughters.

Zadock Pratt, Jr., was born, October 30, 1790, at Stephentown, Rensselaer county, New York, and was the fifth of seven children. His earliest home was thus in a new and comparatively wild and unsubdued region ; and among its privations, its disadvantages, and its hardships, his character was to be formed, and he was to seek his education in things, and his fortune in deeds. His subsequent life will show what signal success can be made to attend energy and perseverance in the midst of the greatest apparent disadvantages.

His earliest recollections were of a childhood whose very sports and pastimes, no less than its little duties, were beset with difficulties. The varying fortune of his father, as well as the newness of the country, left him, in a great measure, to his own resources, to provide,

* Much of the success of Mr. Pratt he is accustomed to ascribe to the early teachings of his mother. The importance of having a good and judicious mother has been dwelt on by many eminent men. Napoleon was strongly impressed with the subject. The same tribute of honor to maternal sympathy and power was paid, with earnest feeling of reverence, by such men as Washington, Adams, and Bowditch.

even in the days of his youth, those amusements which children in the older settlements are accustomed to find ready furnished to their hands. Consequently, the very longings and delights of the child were the first to discipline those powers and energies which in later life were to distinguish the man. Under the care and direction of that best of all earthly boons, a sensible, devoted, pious mother, he was taught from his infancy to search within himself for the elements of power and skill. He could remember nothing earlier than a controlling self-reliance. With him, in reality, the man assumed the prerogative, while the world became the subject. Under the force of circumstances, his mind at once made the senses the medium through which he might search for truth, and its appropriate relations in nature.

To such an one the want of the schools, and other facilities of the more favored communities, though seriously detrimental to progress, yet was not insurmountable in its nature. Every difficulty became a lesson, and every necessity an item of knowledge. In a new country, with the mass of the people, it is the great business of life to secure for themselves its necessary comforts, and to this end the efforts of old and young must combine. With such, the school is resorted to only in the intervals of pressing labor, and not labor in the intervals of school.

So it was with young Pratt. He had access to the common district school, and he is reported to have made good use of it. But the farm, the tannery, and the

workshop, were his great teachers, and his almost constant and only schools. Here we find him, from the earliest, a correct miniature of the future man, an untiring and accurate student in the great university of nature, everywhere reducing every new truth which had its origin in practical life to its appropriate place in his amusements, his farming, or his trade. He seemed instinctively to understand that the true philosophy of success consisted in the knowledge of things. He saw in the farmer the practical student of nature, who, from a close observation of her powers and conditions, was enabled to reap the rich harvests of the earth. He saw in the mechanic the necessary co-worker with the farmer, the agent of power, and the subduer of physical difficulties. In others, he discovered a diversity of assistants, who, while each had his own particular labor to perform, all combined to accomplish a general object. He soon found that life was a condition of desire and labor, and that industry was as necessary to comfort as virtue was to happiness, or perseverance to success.

While he was thus exhibiting the practical bent and power of his mind, and learning to act upon principles, the real importance of which the child but seldom understands, an event occurred which had a tendency to elevate his motives, and to enlarge the subjects of his reflection.

The death of Washington occurred when young Pratt was nine years old : and it was his privilege to be present at one of the public funerals. It was there that

he was first made aware of the grief in which a nation could be involved by the death of one man, and the profound reverence and sense of almost infinite obligation which that grief bespoke on the part of the people. Here he first witnessed that spontaneous and universal homage which was paid to holy principle and the noblest self-sacrificing patriotism, — to a life governed by the purest purposes, and rendered the admiration of the world by the most exalted and magnificent deeds. Though his was a child's wonder and amazement, yet it never lost its power over him ; and his aspirations, if they were those of a child, were nevertheless giving direction and steadiness to his aims.

His mind was strongly wrought upon by every important incident that occurred about him, and it was its character to retain of these everything that could be of essential use to him in later life. His retentive memory, and the remarkable facility with which he adapted himself to circumstances, fitted him, in a special manner, to make the most of the limited advantages which were afforded him. Being almost excessively fond of new things, though not from any fickleness or love of change, but rather from an inclination by his own effort to make new acquisitions, both mental and physical, that to him might belong the merit of possessing them, he was accustomed, when he was attending school, to labor mornings and evenings to pay his own expenses. Thus actuated, he labored on through his childhood, continually making his little conquests.

The first money he ever remembered to have earned was a few pennies which he received for berries which he had gathered. A little later in life, he braided whiplashes and made leather mittens, which he sold for money. When he was twelve years old, he, in company with his brothers, assisted his father in clearing ten acres of land on the "Scotch Patent," and sowing it with wheat. Two years later, he assisted in clearing six acres more in Lexington; dividing his time, as occasion might require, between the tannery and the farm.

Even at that age, in whatever occupation he engaged, he enlisted that ready good will and practical tact which reduced everything to system, and made him at once acquainted, not only with the difficulties involved, but also with the best and surest means of overcoming them. He seldom commenced a work at random. He first endeavored to understand the end to be gained, and then devised the plans which were necessary to accomplish it. There are still standing, among those scenes where his boyhood was passed, relics of his labor, to remind him, as it were, of the difficulties with which his earliest labors were associated. In this way he passed his youth.

At the age of twenty, his health becoming impaired, and his parents fearing lest his constitution might suffer permanent injury from the too vigorous and too various labors of the tannery and the farm, and in accordance with his own wish to become more thoroughly acquainted with other branches of the mechanic arts, he was apprenticed to a saddler, Mr. Luther Hayes, of Durham, Greene

county. Having soon regained his health, he entered with his usual activity upon the labors of his new trade. With a strong desire to do his duty, and become a proficient, he enlisted all his energies in the service of his employer; and his good faith was soon rewarded by a favor from Mr. Hayes of materials for a new saddle, on credit, which he was allowed to work upon after his day's labor was done, and while his fellow-apprentices were at their rest. With this saddle, when finished, he purchased his first watch.

Having completed his apprenticeship, he was hired for the next year by his father and brothers, who were at that time partners in the tanning business, at Lexington Heights, to work as journeyman saddler, for ten dollars per month; after which, he commenced business for himself. He opened a small shop in one end of his father's "bark-house," and here, in reality, he first met the world single-handed and alone. He was accustomed to labor fifteen or sixteen hours a day, — a practical avowal that he looked to industry for his future success. Here he made his first trial at loss and gain. Here he bought the first one-horse wagon that was ever seen in that vicinity; and on finding that his shop, to which, in all his bargains, he generally resorted as his only stock in trade, did not furnish the variety that was desired in exchange for the wagon, he spent an entire day and night in manufacturing a saddle which was required to complete the balance. His industry and skill were made a never-failing source of supply.

He introduced into his business the strictest economy both of time and expense, and the most rigid promptness and exactness into all his accounts. He knew the exact amount of his income, and directed his affairs accordingly; and he never had so small or extensive a stock that he did not at the close of every year know its exact market value.

At intervals, when his trade did not require his particular attention, he resorted to other employments, and especially to the farm, for which he ever had a strong partiality. There, at hay-making or harvesting, he could command from six to eight shillings per day. Now and then he would take an hour for amusement; but this was seldom, though no one was more popular with his fellows.

Having labored a year with habits like these, he made up his first balance-sheet, when he found he had gained \$500. On this sum he continued to advance each successive year, until in a few years he realized a net annual income of \$1400. With the commencement of each new year came new confidence in the theory which he had adopted,—that success was simply the result of industry and prudence. He soon built himself a shop, in one end of which he established a small country store, for the purpose of general barter with the people about him, and where he received all kinds of country produce in exchange for his goods. After collecting in this way a large quantity of produce, he sought a market for it at New York. On one occasion, having been to New York for this purpose, he reached Catskill, on his way home,

between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, and walked the remaining distance of thirty miles the same night. His energy faltered before no obstacle, however apparently great, provided his judgment approved his course as practicable. Indeed, he rather sought to meet and overcome difficulties than to avoid them; for they tended to the refinement of skill and resolution, and strengthened the power of endurance.

From his small beginnings in business, he became convinced that, however high the hopes which his energy and industry might authorize him to entertain, he could not rationally expect to realize a fulfilment of them, without maintaining a close and prudent foresight in respect to the commercial world, with which he had become connected.

He soon learned that the successful man of business was no mere player at a game of chance, but necessarily a systematic observer of things. He not only sought the market, but he studied its elements, its sources and facilities for supply, whether existing in obedience to a principle of permanent demand, or created by false estimates or a fictitious standard. He studied to read, not only what the present indicated of the past, but what it declared of the future also. He knew the folly of those who sought rather to control the market than to be controlled by it.

In this great practical yet severe school, he soon became an adept; and, almost in the very outset of his business life, his sagacity in these matters was brought

to a test. He had just entered the business world, when the country was forced into the stringent commercial regulations consequent upon the war of 1812.

The commercial world became feverish and uncertain. Trade fluctuated between hope and fear; and though new wants sprang up with the troubles of the country, still, regular business was essentially suspended, and industry paralyzed. New engagements were deemed perilous by prudent men, and all who could preserve their interests by controlling them reserved their means for a safer employment. These indications were sufficient to determine the course of action to be pursued by Mr. Pratt. He offered his store for sale, and disposed of it in 1815, — just in time to avoid what he had foreseen.

The revulsion came, and the little trading-house to whom he had just disposed of his stock fell in the common ruin. Mr. Pratt continued the business of his trade, and soon after became a partner with his brothers in the tanning business. He thus, after an absence of nearly five years, resumed once more his connection with that trade and those labors, in which so large a share of his boyhood and youth, under the direction of his father, had been spent. But he returned, not as he left it, a young man merely energetic, industrious, upright and persevering; he had served his apprenticeship, he had begun to reap the fruits of experience, and he resumed his old associations and labors with a spirit that bowed in everything to the supremacy of principle. The skill which had been so successfully applied to mechanics was now

proficient in the more variable and less obvious philosophy of commercial life. He was prepared, therefore, for a broader and more responsible sphere of action, and rose at once to take the lead in the business of the partnership.

He was in favor of an early sale of their stock, as more likely to realize a profit, and less liable to those reverses to which the market is more or less subject in the later season. At one time his brothers saw occasion to dissent from his advice to make an early sale, and recommended delay. But the earnest manner and assurance with which he predicted an essential reduction, ere long, in the market price, at length prevailed, and a fair profit was realized. A short time subsequent to this sale, the market price was reduced twenty-five per cent.

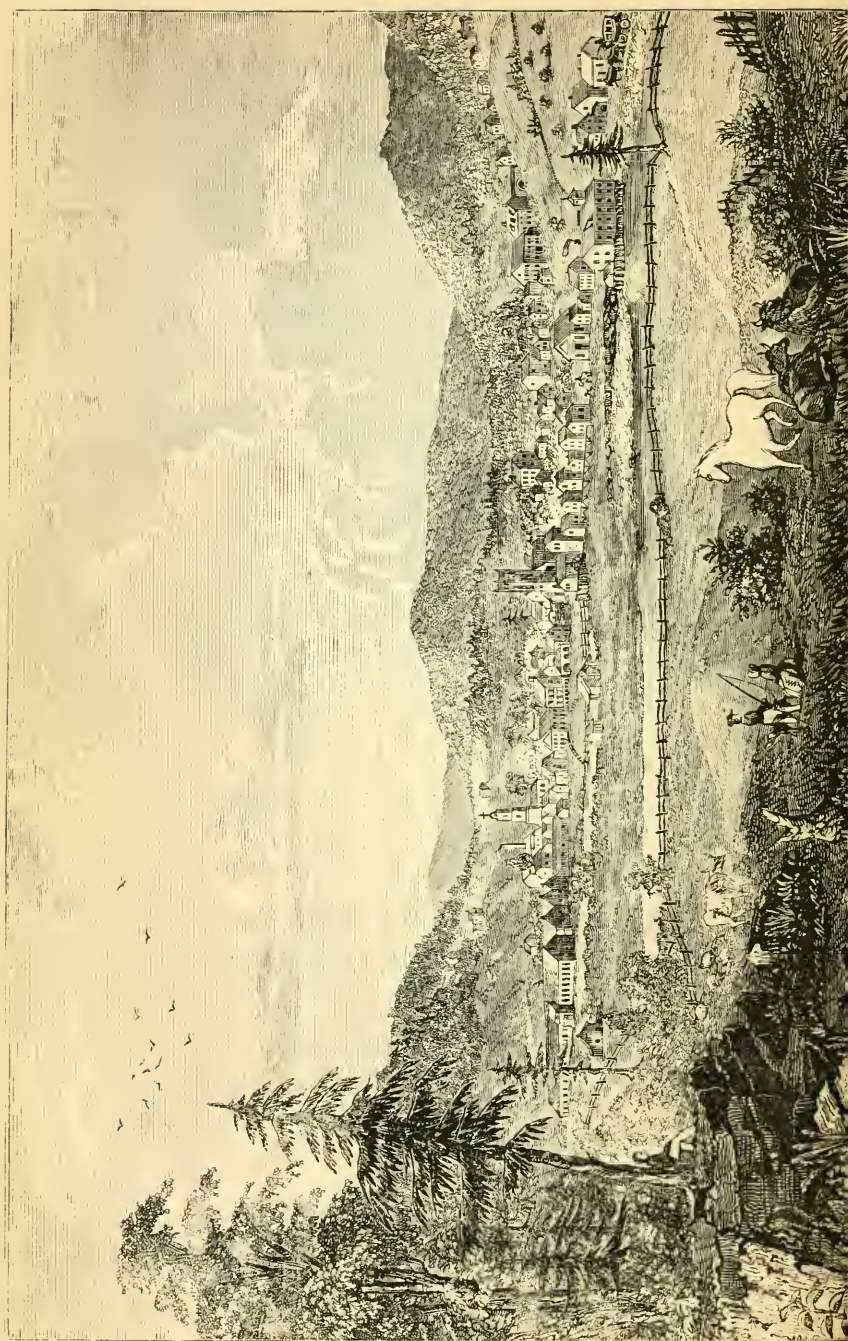
His career as a partner in this new firm was characterized by the same constantly increasing success that had attended his efforts when alone, in a more limited sphere. The business of the firm steadily advanced, both in its importance and in its gains, and was managed on terms the most liberal and paternal. At this time, the eldest brother alone was married, though all lived under the same roof; and it is a fact which speaks most significantly for the high-toned feeling and generous sentiment of those unmarried brothers, that, throughout the entire period, which was one of signal success, and when all the avarice of the man would ordinarily have been aroused, they never suffered that family to be called to an account, for its expenses, which were all paid from the gen-

eral fund of the company. It was, as in their childhood, a family of brothers ; and, in resuming their former more intimate relations, they found in the gratification of fraternal feeling a reward which entirely removed all idea of individual pecuniary obligation.

Soon after entering into business with his brothers, the Presbyterian Church and Society in Lexington became very much involved and embarrassed in pecuniary matters, in consequence of the non-payment of the rents and assessments by a large number of the members. All efforts to devise the requisite measures to enforce or persuade payment had failed, and there seemed no alternative but to submit to consequences the most serious to its very existence. At their annual meeting for the choice of trustees, the energetic business talent of Mr. Pratt pointed him out as their last hope. He was accordingly elected one of the trustees, and collector for the society. It was not an office to be coveted, and least of all by him, a young man, when age seemed to give privilege to the veterans in the church to reprove imprudent delinquents. Yet, as it was thought to be his duty, he said he would accept the office ; and, believing, as he did, “ that the laborer is worthy of his hire,” he should insist on prompt payment of all dues. If the office were merely nominal, it were better abandoned ; but if associated with important duties, an honest man could not risk his sense of right by abandoning or neglecting them ; and if, in any case, he found that the essential necessities of the society and his own authority were not sufficient to

induce a prompt payment, he should at once call to his aid legal proceedings. Many were instantly alarmed at the choice they had made, and believed that the interests of the church were endangered, — but it was too late to retract.

The decision of the new collector had the desired effect ; for in two weeks the dues were all voluntarily paid in, and the finances of the church redeemed from embarrassment.



CHAPTER II.

Military life of Mr. Pratt. — A volunteer in the war of 1812. — Stationed at Brooklyn Heights. — Interview with the commissary. — Retires from service. — Appointed captain of a company. — Liberality as an officer. — Commissioned colonel. — Escorts Lafayette into Catskill. — Skill in the use of arms.

MR. PRATT was no favored heir of fortune. He had received no heritage but a birth under the dominion of necessity; and the only smiles which had gladdened his life were those which were bestowed by nature, as the almost trackless forest, with its desolating terrors, gave place to the cultivated fields.

His very home even was the price of his energies and his sacrifices. He had purchased his freedom, his security, and his competency, by vigorous conflict with dangers and privations; and would he be the man to falter when the hour for their defence arrived? Would he, who was familiar with the story of the cruelties and the sufferings which were heaped upon the kindest of fathers, be likely to forget that father when the same foeman came to desecrate that land which was rendered sacred by his trials and sacrifices? We shall see.

However foreign to his mind, when he first commenced business, may have been all idea of the extensive intercourse which in his mature life he was to have with the world, he was accustomed to watch the growing energies

of the young nation, and proudly to participate in the common feeling of wonder and admiration, as the new and almost limitless fields for prosperous enterprise opened, as if by the power of magic.

Though all saw and acknowledged the obvious indications of increasing American power, courage and pride, yet none could fail to see that Great Britain was slow to render that prompt consideration and justice which equals concede to equals, as due alike to honor and interest. The parent yields slowly to the child. Age presumes upon youth, and strength upon weakness. It became evident, to all unprejudiced observers, that England supposed she could pursue her career of insult and wrong towards the United States with an impunity that would prove neither a tax upon her treasury nor a stain upon her pride. But in this she was soon called upon to witness a practical demonstration of her own great errors.

Mr. Pratt heard the war of 1812 proclaimed with a deep and lively interest; and saw his country forced to choose between a dishonorable, slavish existence, and all the terrific adventures of a bloody contest. It must either surrender those laurels which were beginning to speak so significantly and proudly of the nobility of human freedom, or they must once more come forward, and stake their lives and their homes in defence of them.

Mr. Pratt was at this time in the full tide of his early success in business; but he was the son of a revolution-

ary patriot, and should he refuse to lend a hand to aid in completing that work, in the commencement of which his father had so nobly perilled his life? Just previous to the threatened attack upon New York, his name was enrolled as a soldier; and he was soon after called into service, and stationed at Brooklyn Heights, with a view to the defence of New York.

His active business talent and energetic bearing soon made him conspicuous in his company, and he was appointed its steward,—on many accounts a most important office. His whole soul being devoted to the pursuit of high purposes, he had not expected to be brought into contact with an enemy, excepting those against whom he had been called to defend the city. He soon, however, found, in discharging the duties of his new office, that it was possible for those who unworthily held high places among the professed friends of the country, to avail themselves of the distresses and emergencies of that country, and the rigid discipline of the camp, to which the soldiery of all classes submitted in the noblest spirit of self-sacrifice, to increase their own emoluments and personal gains. They would preserve just enough of patriotism to crowd themselves into the furthest outskirts of the war, in the shape of officers of public trust, but away from danger and hardship; and there they would hang, like harpies, over the always too scanty repast spread for the common soldier, to rob or to pillage, as occasion or opportunity might offer.

One of these Mr. Pratt met, in the commissary of

whom he was accustomed to receive the supplies for his company. He soon ascertained that the commissary uniformly made very considerable curtailment in the allowance which belonged to each soldier by the regulations of the army. This was enough to excite not merely the indignation, but all the energy, of Mr. Pratt's character. He knew the right, and there was nothing in the sternness or austerity of military command that could overawe his purpose to pursue it ; and he resolved that the injustice done to his company should proceed no further. Accordingly, when he went to receive his next supply, he selected six of the best soldiers to accompany him, and demanded the full, lawful allowance. The commissary, surprised and vexed at what he considered the young steward's impertinence, and mistaking the character of the man with whom he was dealing, commanded him "*to take what he had, and be off.*" But young Pratt was firm ; and, in a tone as decided as that of the commissary, replied, with a true military bend of the body, "*All or none ! The soldier shall not be cheated while I am steward !*" This was sufficient : for, although the commissary might command obedience, and was burning with rage to do so, still he saw it was not prudent to enforce it with a young man who was so fully conscious of his rights, so well advised as to the law, and so discreetly resolute in its due execution. He could not retract without disgrace ; he could not yield and preserve his power. He had no alternative but to submit, and bend the circumstances of the case to relieve his

necessity. He delivered what he had with an awkward grace, as if designed for only a portion, and promised the remainder during the coming day.

During this time, Mr. Pratt was merely a soldier in camp. The company had not been called into any active service. It was not for an eager spirit like his to endure for a great length of time the tediousness of a camp-life, like that; and seeing no immediate prospect that his country would require his more active service, he procured a substitute to act in his stead, and returned to the more active pursuits of private life.

On the 17th of March, 1821, he received from Governor Clinton a captain's commission in the fifth regiment of artillery. At the time he was commissioned, the company was fast declining from its rank with other companies. Among other things which it wanted at that time, was a suitable field-piece; but twelve were at the disposal of the commissary-general, and already thirty-six applications had been made for them. Captain Pratt urged his claims, as an act of such evident justice to the company under his command, in a manner so soldier-like as to convince the governor that the piece could not be intrusted to better hands. Previous to obtaining the field-piece, he had, at his own expense, presented a new uniform to the company; and whatever was needed, for which the law made no provision, his purse freely supplied. On receiving the cannon, he proposed to Governor Clinton that he would have it mounted at his own expense. "No, young man," said the governor, "you have done enough, without that."

Captain Pratt soon had the satisfaction of seeing, what might have been confidently anticipated, that the company under his command had more than recovered any rank which it had formerly held in the regiment.

Having held this commission somewhat more than two years, he resigned it, and subsequently, on the 12th of July, 1823, was commissioned colonel in the 116th regiment of infantry, as an expression of the unanimous wish of the officers of the regiment to which he belonged. He soon brought his new command to the same high rank in the state which his company had occupied in the regiment. Whatever he deemed essential to a proper regard for skill in the arts of military life, he spared no pains to provide. He had studied mankind too carefully not to perceive the evident advantage with which that man labored who had learned how to beget a hearty good will in the minds of his associates. He gave them his attention and regard, and thus won for them a position which secured the regard of others. He added to the attractions of military life by entertainments, sometimes given to the officers, and sometimes to the entire regiment; and by music, and other diversions appropriate to the practical soldier's life.

He combined the pleasures of a military exercise with the sacred duties of the soldier. He led his companions-in-arms to appreciate their position as connected with their country, and taught them the dignity which belonged to their calling. It was during the continuance of this commission that Col. Pratt was called upon to

command the escort of Gen. Lafayette into Catskill, in 1825, during his visit to this country. After holding this commission three years, he resigned it, and retired from military life, carrying with him to his private pursuits the best wishes of the entire regiment, and a popularity which has been rarely equalled.

At that day, there was no better test of the repute in which a man was held by his fellow-citizens than promotion to rank in military life. The glory which gathered around the retirement of the veteran officer of the American Revolution, and the profound respect that was everywhere paid to him, were the objects to which the ambitious desired to approach most nearly. Consequently, military honors were eagerly sought after, and were to be won only by true merit. They were posts of commanding influence and high distinction.

We do not claim for Mr. Pratt a military distinction for services which he, in common with others, performed as a citizen-soldier, and which are due to our common country alike from all. In speaking of his military life, it was our purpose simply to show that he excelled as a citizen soldier and officer, as he has done in the performance of all other duties which he has attempted. He was practically an able tactician, a skilful artillerist, and in the use of small arms rarely equalled.

As an instance of his skill, it is related of him that, on one occasion, when he was practising with the cannon, he directed it at an elm-tree, and, at a distance of more than twenty rods, grazed the bark at the first shot; and, at the

second, sent the shot directly through the heart of the tree. On another occasion, being in company with a party of hunters, it was proposed to make a trial of skill with the rifle. A small paper was posted upon a tree, and the colonel called upon to "lead off." "Certainly," said he; and, taking deliberate aim, off hand, he sent the first shot to the centre of the mark. "That's luck! that's luck, — not skill!" shouted his companions; "try again, colonel." "As you say, my friends," he quietly remarked; and, drawing up his rifle, he fired a second time. On examination, it did not appear that he had hit even the tree; and his companions shouted again, "There, we told you it was luck, — nothing but luck, colonel." But the colonel could not understand why a case of mere good luck should be followed by one of absolute failure. He called for an axe, and, on cutting into the tree, he found the two bullets, one directly upon the other! No one thought it worth while to attempt an improvement upon this. Still later in life, when he was about sixty years of age, after a short trip at hunting, during which he had not missed one out of six shots, a friend proposed to test his skill by throwing two apples into the air; and, on doing it, Col. Pratt hit them both, with two successive shots.

He was never satisfied with being second in skill in whatever he was engaged; and this not so much from a desire to out-rival others, as to make the nearest possible approach to perfection, both for the pleasure which it afforded, and the good it would accomplish by example.



View of the Rocks. near Prattsville, N. Y.

CHAPTER III.

Marriage. — Early death of his wife. — Makes new copartnership arrangements. — Plans a trading expedition to Canada. — Incidents of travel. — Observations on what he saw. — The wealthy merchant with an Indian wife. — His reception. — Meets a British pensioner. — A tory. — Anecdotes of reception at hotels on his return home. — Burning of his tannery. — An interesting incident. — Close of Canada expedition.

IN pursuing Col. Pratt's career as a military man, we have somewhat departed from an exact chronological order in the events in his life. But this seemed necessary, in order to present his character in its true light, and to show how controlling were its leading features, even in a sphere which, in most respects, was so widely different from that to which he had been educated, and to which he had devoted his attention with such an absorbing purpose.

The value of his character, as affording a lesson for the young, and exerting a salutary influence, and as an example of uniform success under a great variety of circumstances, consists in the knowledge of the principles which lead to such results. We now return to his private life, and pursue events more in the order of their occurrence.

Having resided in his brother's family about three years, after entering as a partner into the firm, Mr. Pratt married, October 18, 1818, Miss Beda Dickerman, of

Hampden, Connecticut, a young lady of much personal beauty, of easy and graceful manners, amiable disposition, and of deep, ardent piety, — a woman, in all respects, fitted to give to her new home a character that would second all the high aspirations of her husband. But the rugged duties of life in a new country were too much for her delicate health, and, being constitutionally inclined to consumption, she fell a victim to that disease, April 19, 1819, six months after her marriage.

Soon after this severe affliction, Mr. Pratt made a change in his copartnership arrangements. He and his brother Ezra purchased the interest of their brother Bennett, for the sum of twenty-two hundred dollars.

In the winter of 1819–20, a trading expedition to Canada was planned. Having made the necessary arrangements, he set out for Kingston, Canada, in company with three of his neighbors, who were engaged in a similar enterprise, to seek a market for leather, harnesses, and dried-apples.

This project was, at that time, beset with difficulties which are entirely unknown at the present day. It was in the depth of winter, and the route lay through a country but slightly redeemed from its natural wildness by the hand of civilization, though Yankee enterprise had already pushed itself far out into the western world, and showed, by the humble, quiet, though scantily furnished homes, how successfully it had battled with the fierce elements both of the country and the climate.

Having arrived at Kingston, they were obliged to pay

the required duties on their goods, before proceeding further into the country. While making the necessary arrangements, the landlord of the house where they were stopping, either from a high sense of the importance of his place, or from a foolish supposition, that he was called upon to rebuke, in the persons of these four Yankees, the presumption of the whole Yankee nation in setting at defiance the royal power of Britain, endeavored to provoke a quarrel between the travellers and the citizens of Kingston. But the Yankees had been educated in a different school. These were times when quarrels could not be avoided without difficulty, but this was not an occasion upon which the slightest interest of their country depended. Individual bluster and defiance were one thing, — patriotism, quite another.

Mr. Pratt did not want muscle, or nerve, or courage, that would have done essential service in rebuking the discourteous landlord; but his object, at this time, was honorable and peaceful trade, and under such circumstances, his discretion and shrewdness were the only weapons to be employed. He thought he saw an inclination on the part of some of his comrades to pursue the quarrel till it should be brought to a crisis; and, quickly stepping forward, without any apparent apprehension, he placed the trunk containing the funds of the company in the hands of one of his companions, which at once recalled his attention to the probable consequences to them of a conflict, — the loss of the object of their journey, as well as their present funds. A moment's

reflection brought the Yankees back to their senses, and peace was restored, much to the chagrin of the landlord.

From Kingston, they proceeded to Belleville, where they found a market for their goods. Having disposed of these to good advantage, and with a view to invest the funds in furs, which might be obtained from the Indians, Mr. Pratt, in company with two traders, left for a place back of Rice Lake, carrying with him a knapsack well stored with bread and butter and salt pork, a mitten-full of dollars, a bag of gold in a pocket placed in his inner shirt, and about two thousand dollars in bills.

Of the character of the incidents connected with that journey the reader will form the most correct idea by a quotation from a letter written by Mr. Pratt to a friend, in which he gives a description of them.

“At noon,” he says, “we mounted on an old oak of enormous size, which had been lying there for many years, and had, no doubt, been the patriarch of the forest, — but now a mighty ruin. I made a dinner of raw pork, bread and butter; and I enjoyed it, homely as it was, for I had travelled through the snow since early in the morning. After our dinner, we went in a direction due north, but, missing our way in the forest, were compelled to pass the cold night,—which, in this country, is cold in earnest,—without house or bed. The first thing we did was to strike a fire in an old maple top; soon after, we made our evening meal from a piece of pork, which, this time, we cooked upon the end of a stick, washed down with some cold tea and whiskey, and

then looked for a lodging-place. Of course, we were confined to such '*make-out*' as our ingenuity could devise. Above was the clear, cold sky, with the stars shining with that peculiar brightness they always display in cold weather. Making a virtue of necessity, I got together some pieces of bark, and laying them down upon the snow, I cut and broke up some beech and maple twigs, as there were none of my favorite hemlock boughs, to keep off the wind and cold, laying them upon the bark ; then, taking my bag of dollars for a pillow, and drawing on my fur cap, and the lion-skin cape of my great coat over my head, I went to sleep, and slept until midnight ; when, taking another drink of cold tea, I slept soundly until morning, suffering not the slightest inconvenience from my hard bed upon the snow. Next morning, early, we pursued our course, wandering here and there in the supposed direction, until one o'clock in the afternoon, when we came upon an Indian trail, which, from our knowledge of their life, we well knew, from observing twigs and boughs all broken the same way, and at night found their hut. The squaws were making sugar, from whom our traders purchased some skins, while John Snake, for that was the Indian's name, was off after beaver. These squaws, in bargaining, will sell only a few skins at a time ; and, after each sale, expect, as a matter of course, a drink of whiskey. This our traders well knew, and had made the liquor very weak with water ; notwithstanding which, one of the squaws, from the excess of her draughts, became quite drunk.

We did but a small business in the way of purchasing furs, the Indians having been unsuccessful in their hunting excursions this season.”

While at Rice Lake, and, indeed, during his entire stay in Canada, Mr. Pratt studied carefully the resources of the country, the characteristics and habits of the people, and availed himself of every opportunity which offered of becoming acquainted with whatever could interest or instruct him. He sought for incident as well as pecuniary profit, and every adventure was noted and enjoyed with a lively interest.

At Rice Lake he heard of the trading-house of Capt. Anderson, a wealthy merchant of Kingston, who had, for the purposes of trade with the Indians, established a house some fifteen miles away from any white settlement, and in the very fastnesses of the forest. Here the merchant lived, a considerable portion of the time, with an Indian woman, whom he called his wife, and by whom he had several children. This secluded dwelling the hunters of the country had frequently visited, and reported that they had often seen the children of this woman, — sprightly half-breeds, — engaged in hunting, but that no white man was permitted to see the Indian beauty who had captivated the merchant of Kingston. Mr. Pratt, with the curiosity of youth, and spirit of romance, determined to visit the domicile of the captain, and see his Indian wife. Arriving near the spot, — a little clearing in the woods, — he found a small log hut, of two rooms. One of the rooms appeared to be the more public or common room, fur-

nished with a table, a cup, a comb-basket and comb, a few stools, and a bucket of water. The boys of the family were out upon a hunt, and Anderson had gone some distance down the lake. Determined to effect the object of his visit, Mr. Pratt opened the door of the other room, which was apparently the private portion of the dwelling, or boudoir, of the tawny mistress of the forest. On entering, he asked for a drink of water. The first object that met his eye was a little pappoose, swinging in an Indian cradle, and amusing itself with rattles made of deer's hoofs. The squaw, — Mr. Anderson will pardon us for using the term, — the instant she saw Mr. Pratt, threw a blanket over her head, with an impatient gesture for him to be gone ; while Tommy, a negro, who was in the room, perhaps as a guard or servant of the woman, angrily cried out, "*Water nuff in turrer room ; — wunner wat he want ?*" Our adventurer, having accomplished all he desired, in obtaining a glimpse of the *forest belle*, who had captivated the heart of the rich man of Kingston, set out on his return, with less of romance than he had before his visit. Having doubtless excited the curiosity of the reader as to the appearance of Madam Anderson, it is but a reasonable act to give a brief description of her person. She was a dark, six-foot Missassaga squaw, without a lineament or mark of beauty, either in her face or figure. The grossness of her form was only surpassed by the uncouthness of her manner. Mr. Pratt felt neither respect for the taste nor sympathy in the feelings of the merchant.

While beyond Rice Lake, Mr. Pratt observed with great interest a remarkable mound of earth, on the north shore of the lake. It appeared to be about forty feet in height, and covered one or two acres of ground. It was covered with a thick growth of oaks, some of which were from eighteen to twenty-four inches in diameter. At a small distance north of this mound, was a large mass of human bones, in various stages of decay, which had been buried in the sand, and were now washed out by the action of the floods and waves of the lake. The tradition of the Indians, respecting these remains, is, that, some centuries ago, a great battle was fought near this place, between the Hurons and Iroquois; that it was long and bloody; that heaps of the bodies of the slain were brought from the battle-field, and buried in the sand near the shores of the lake; and that the mound now remaining formed part of what was once an earth-work fortification, erected to defend the resident tribe against their hostile invaders.

Rice Lake takes its name from the wild rice that grows in immense quantities in the marshes about its shores. It is a large body of water, some ten or twelve miles north of Lake Ontario, and discharges itself by the river Trent into the head of the Bay Quinte. Here, at the time of Mr. Pratt's visit, were to be seen immense flocks of wild geese, feeding upon the rice that was standing above the ice of the lake, now entirely frozen over.

At Belleville he met an old man, formerly from

Columbia county, New York, who was living on a pension granted him by the British government for services which he performed as a tory, against the colonies, in the war of the Revolution; and though he received his crown a day, he was otherwise poor, neglected and despised, even by those who were paying him his pecuniary reward. He was realizing, in all its bitterness, to him the most unwelcome truth, that a man cannot violate the principles of patriotism, without convincing the world that he is a traitor, and only wants an opportunity to commit treason against the universal principles of humanity. Though the old man was reaping a terrific reward in this hopeless exile from all social confidence and trust, even in the very bosom of his home, yet Mr. Pratt could not believe the reward unmerited or unjust.

Having accomplished the object of his expedition, he directed his course homeward, and arrived at Hamilton during the session of the courts, where he stopped one night, and was lodged in the bar-room of a public house, whose keeper repented of his want of attention, the moment he found his guest the possessor of money. He met with a similar adventure on his arrival at Albany, when he applied, in the garb which had become much worn and defaced by severe service, at one of the principal hotels, for lodgings for the night.

The landlord's knowledge of human nature was quite equal to that of the ancient hostess of Megara, who mistook the Achæan general, Philopœmen, for one of his own servants, and desired him to assist in the kitchen,

to prepare for his own expected reception. It cannot be said, however, by Colonel Pratt, as it was by Philopoemen, — when he was found by one of his officers cleaving wood, and enjoying the joke at the expense of the good woman, — that he was “*paying the penalty of his deformity.*” It was the rough exterior that deceived the landlord; — he did not look beyond the lion-skin coat and huge travelling-cap. While he was all attention to those whose dress indicated a tailor’s skill, he allowed Colonel Pratt to stand in the bar-room with his bag in hand, without the slightest token of welcome.

The only answer he received, in reply to his inquiry for lodgings, was a gruff remark, “*I suppose you can be accommodated,*” though the landlord’s looks evidently contradicted his language.

“Can I have supper?” inquired the colonel. “*I suppose you can,*” was again the impatient reply. The guest saw his position, and was quite willing to enjoy the joke. He quietly placed his bag within the bar, and desired that it might be taken care of. “What is it?” asked the landlord, abruptly, as if some improper request had been made of him. The colonel, wishing to note the change of expression of the man when he was told of the contents, gave him one of his earnest looks for a moment, and said, with a significant smile, “*Money!*”

The landlord, observing, for the first time, the peculiar bearing of his visiter, and the manner of his *reply*, was

satisfied that he had not only made a mistake, but was already discovered. The sudden change from indifference to marked attention, from actual discourtesy to excessive politeness, was truly amusing.

We might repeat several anecdotes, which are told with much good humor by Colonel Pratt, to illustrate the truthfulness of the poet, who so aptly says that

“Wealth makes the man, — and want of it, the fellow;”

but, as they all illustrate the same principle, we have deemed their recital unnecessary.

Such incidents, though apparently trivial, were to the mind of Mr. Pratt significant indices of the short-sighted, narrow-minded policy, which governs the actions of many men; and with a heart full of generous sentiment, and a mind of liberal and far-seeing views, he drew from them a lesson which influenced him through life.

At Catskill, he had occasion to visit the bank, when Mr. Hill, the cashier, inquired of him if he had heard from his brothers recently. Mr. Pratt replied, “No, I have not.” Mr. Hill then informed him that their tannery, at Lexington, had been burned.

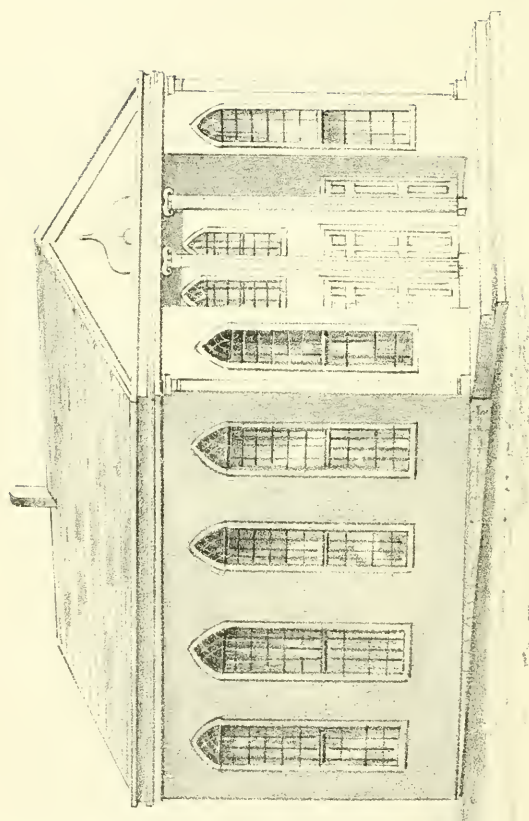
“Burned!” repeated the colonel, with earnestness.

“Yes,” continued Mr. Hill; and then briefly gave the particulars. After a thoughtful pause, and with a manner entirely characteristic of the man, Mr. Pratt said, “Thank God that, with industry, economy and good health, we can soon build another!”

This he soon realized, on a better and more extensive plan.

An interesting incident, connected with the loss of the tannery, is worthy of mention. The brothers had, long previous to this time, become extensively and favorably known; and this loss at once excited the sympathy of a large circle of friends, and a very considerable subscription was immediately sent to their relief. Such an expression of good feeling, at such a time, was peculiarly gratifying, and full of the most pleasing assurances and encouragements. On receiving the money, Mr. Pratt, after reminding his brothers that the church stood very much in need of repairs, said, “Although we have sustained this great loss, *we are still as well off as many of our good neighbors* who have subscribed for our relief. Let us repair the church.” The suggestion was immediately adopted, and nobly carried out.

Having successfully closed his Canadian expedition, Mr. Pratt never desired to renew it, or to extend his experience in Indian traffic, though he was accustomed to remark that no citizen of the United States knew how to place a proper estimate upon the advantages and privileges of his home, till he had visited Canada, or some dependency of a more absolute government, and observed the impotency and inefficiency which characterize every variety of both individual and associated enterprise, and the laxity in the habits and principles of the people.



METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

CHAPTER IV.

Resumes his business at the tannery. — Appointed magistrate. — Marries his second wife. — Dissolves copartnership. — Death of his second wife. — His property. — Plan of enlarging his business. — Reasons. — Surveys the forests for a location. — Events connected with survey. — Plans a new tannery. — Commencement of Prattsville. — Leather as a commodity. — Home market. — New York supplied by other states. — His method. — Active habits. — Novel modes of rebuke. — Anecdotes. — Danger predicted by croakers.

AFTER returning from Canada, Mr. Pratt resumed his labors, with his brother Ezra, at the tannery in Lexington.

This branch of business was at that time rapidly increasing in importance. It was readily foreseen that it was destined, in the course of a few years, to be a considerable branch of national enterprise. Though it was at this time in its infancy, yet the firm found it the source of large annual profits; and they were encouraged to extend their establishment, so that they might keep pace with the growing demands of the market.

In 1821, Mr. Pratt was appointed one of the magistrates of Lexington, which office he filled in a manner both honorable to himself and satisfactory to his fellow-citizens.

In 1823, he married a second wife, a sister of his former wife, whom she strongly resembled, both in mind and person. But she, too, was a victim of consumption,

of which disease she died, April 22, 1824, in less than a year after her marriage. Thus again was his home rendered desolate, and his hopes for the quiet and solace of domestic life disappointed. Though a man of iron purpose, and of powers the most self-controlling, yet in him these characteristics lost all their naturally forbidding sternness and severity, in complete submission to a heart overflowing with the most generous sentiment and the kindest emotion. It is not strange that a person thus constituted should, under a bereavement like that which he now experienced, seek opportunity for a change of scenes, which might at least furnish a partial relief from the sorrows to which he was so vividly alive.

Having entertained the purpose of seeking for a location where he might engage in the tanning business on a scale much more in accordance with what he conceived to be the real demands of the state and the nation, the death of his second wife tended to hasten the execution of this purpose. He soon after brought his business with his brother to a close, and the partnership was dissolved in 1824.

On looking over his affairs, after the partnership was dissolved, and settling his accounts, he found that he had a capital of fourteen thousand dollars with which to commence his new enterprise. This sum of fourteen thousand dollars, which many would have looked upon as a competency not to be risked in further operations, was what Colonel Pratt had to rely upon as his only money

capital. Those who believe that he was wrong in venturing it in more extensive pursuits may be right as stating a mere abstract proposition, but they are wrong in the application of the doctrine in this particular instance. The great majority of men would act very unwisely in placing a competency at risk on the ocean of business; but when a man feels that he is competent to navigate that ocean,—that his skill and strength and resources are equal to any emergency that can arise,—that he is worthy to be intrusted with the destinies of others,—he would be guilty of a gross neglect of duty, were he to refrain from entering upon those pursuits which nature has clearly indicated to be such as he is well qualified to control.

But how is an active man to know that he is peculiarly well fitted for a particular business? In the same way that other men discover their vocations. As the poet discovers that he can give form and expression to divine thoughts, and clothe with words what many feel but few can utter; as the painter finds within himself the genius to embody a frown or a smile, and to transfer the thrilling scenes of life to the canvas; as the man of science discovers the chain of causes which give birth to those results which make up the world of progress, the great end of being,—so the man of business is moved by his capacities, and guided by his judgment, to employ his time and means for purposes demanded by the wants of men, and deemed practicable by knowledge and experience.

In this way are the great men made to become the master spirits of the world of industry, by whom the energies and labors of millions are either directly or indirectly guided or controlled, and who have succeeded to the places once held by barons and other wielders of the sword,—men like the founder of the house of Medici, like Ango, Gresham, Peel, and others, who are celebrated in the history of commerce and manufactures.

One of the surest evidences which a man can give of his fitness to engage in business is his sagacity to discover what are the real wants of the country to which he belongs; and another is his ability in opening up channels through which to supply those wants. Colonel Pratt demonstrated his fitness to have a place in that department of human effort where he now holds so conspicuous a station, in both these respects.

No occasion had yet led to a full and thorough survey of the facilities which the country in that vicinity afforded for extensive manufactures and trade; consequently, there was no source to which he could go for the requisite information concerning a suitable location, short of an actual personal survey of the country; and he was not a person to engage in an enterprise without a proper knowledge of its promises and dangers. He spent most of the summer of 1824 in exploring, on foot, and alone with his dog, the mountain passes in the vicinity of Middletown, and the counties of Delaware, Sullivan, and Ulster; often wading through the water and mud of the lowlands and marshes, and along the water-courses,

till nine o'clock at night, and in a country where but few families had as yet fixed their homes. But his life had been almost one continued struggle with difficulties and dangers, and he was not to be overcome by them now.*

*In these early times, Mr. Pratt was among the foremost in seeking out the wolf and bear, or hunting for the fierce panther. Knowing himself to be "*a good shot*," he never thought of retreating, and it was sure death to the animal that came within the range of his rifle. To show his remarkable self-possession, we give one or two adventures which happened in the forest, although they are not of that thrilling interest which may be found in similar relations. Indeed, it may have been the case that his cool and deliberate bearing saved him from an exciting contest with these ferocious animals of the wilderness.

In one of his exploring expeditions, he met a huge bear in his solitary path, when he was without arms. As quick as thought, he flourished his hat, and moving towards the brute, with a loud voice, frightened him off at full speed down a ravine.

While quite a youth, early in the fall, he went by moonlight to lie in wait for deer among the wheat-fields near by the wood. After lying by the fence till about nine o'clock, he heard a noise among the branches, and expecting every instant to see a deer, he held his rifle in readiness. But the next moment a most terrific scream from a large panther—enough to make the stoutest heart tremble—broke upon the night air, and made the woods echo. He had a large dog with him, but he crouched in fear at his feet. Mr. Pratt was not only unmoved by the danger which awaited him, but left his place of concealment, to be ready to shoot the panther, on his approach. His boldness saved him, for the animal soon retired into the thicket; and the huntsman, though perfectly calm, was not unwilling, under the dangerous circumstances of his position, to turn his face towards home.

At a later period, in 1840, while at West-kill, measuring bark, Mr. Pratt saw a panther run along and climb a tree. Without a moment's hesitation, and without a weapon of any kind, he left the bark, and ran with all his speed towards the tree, swinging his hat, for the purpose of keeping the animal up until guns could be brought to shoot him. The panther, seeing such a fearless pursuit, jumped down quite near to his pursuer, and, with much apparent fright, soon ran and sprang out of sight into the woods. It was a dangerous experiment, but, with such self-possession, it proved a safe one.

He at length fixed upon Big Falls, on the Schoharie-kill, and contracted with the owners for its purchase. This property was held in twelve shares, by four owners. On the day appointed for the transfer of the title, he found that all the owners except one — H. T. Becker — refused to fulfil the contract. “Well,” said he to Becker, “the backing out of the others is no fault of yours; and I will take your share, as I agreed.” But the extent of the purchase was not sufficient to answer his purpose, and he was therefore obliged to renew his search. The owners of Big Falls shortly afterwards signified their willingness to abide by their contract; but Mr. Pratt had no desire to recommence a negotiation with men who had proved false to their engagements.

While seeking a location, a generous-hearted Frenchman, M. Losette, offered to give him a site at Pine Hill. But this location was too limited to meet the plans which he entertained, and he felt constrained to decline the generous offer.

Subsequently, after a careful examination, he selected the site where Prattsville now stands, a short distance above Big Falls, in the western part of the town of Windham, — a large town, which at that time included nearly the entire region of the Catskill Mountains. He was not attracted to this place by the advance which had been made by civilization in this vicinity; for, as yet, only a few farms had been redeemed from the meadows, which lay along the Schoharie-kill, Batavia, or Red-kill; and its communication with Catskill was by a narrow,

half-formed road, which led over the mountains. But the vicinity possessed other resources, which Colonel Pratt readily discovered. Its water privileges were good and abundant; the mountains and hill-sides were covered with immense forests of hemlock,* which was so great a consideration in his trade; it possessed a deep, rich soil, and localities admirably fitted to become the sites of thriving and populous villages and towns; and his quick discernment and foresight led him to conclude that the day could not be far distant when Yankee enterprise would demand and open a great thoroughfare through this region, which lies between the rich western lands and the great market of the east.

*The *white hemlock* is a tall *evergreen* tree, which generally grows on the south side of mountain ranges. It is very abundant in the counties of Greene, Delaware, and Sullivan, New York, though extensively cut off by the enterprise of Colonel Pratt, for tanning purposes. It grows to a height of sixty to one hundred feet, and is often four feet in diameter, and two hundred years of age. The timber is tough and durable, and is used for a great variety of purposes. It is excellent for building, for shafts of mill-wheels, joists, plank for houses and roads, shingles, &c. &c. It is much used for fences. The timber is not easily warped by the weather.

For tanning, the bark is peeled, and after one or two days' drying, it is piled into cord-piles. Two or three trees of moderate size make about a cord of bark. The growth of wood which succeeds the hemlock is the beech and the maple.

The extent of the medicinal virtues of the hemlock is as yet unknown. The hand may be thrust into the boiling *strong* liquor made from the tanning bark, and withdrawn, without causing the least burn — a singular fact, but one well known at the tanneries.

Red hemlock timber is more shaky, knotty and brittle, than the white. The tree does not grow to so great a height, though its tanning qualities are the same. The bark is less smooth. It grows both in low and in high lands, and is found in more abundance on the north than on the south side of the mountains.

On the 24th of October, 1824, Colonel Pratt went down to the junction of the Schoharie-kill and the Batavia-kill, in a one-horse wagon, carrying all his substance with him, and purchased, for one thousand three hundred dollars, the beautiful meadow on which Prattsville now stands. The next day, he "broke ground" for his great tannery. To those who were to be his neighbors, he said, "I have come to live with you, and not on you." Having secured the requisite assistance, he commenced his work, began at once to build his dam, and declared to his workmen that, late as it was before he commenced his work, he should swim across his own pond that autumn, which he did on the 17th of November following, though the day was "bitter cold and ice was making fast."

The considerations which governed Colonel Pratt in planning his new establishment are not unfrequently either entirely overlooked, or else but very inadequately estimated. At this time he thoroughly counted the cost of an extensive establishment, and the probabilities of its success in a country like the one in which he had located. He reduced the subject to its proper elements. He considered the permanency and extent of want, and the sources and means of supply.

The manufacture and preparation of leather had afforded employment to thousands in every civilized country. Its uses were permanent and progressive. Its usefulness was proved by its antiquity. Many things which we are accustomed to regard as indispensable

are so from habit only, and were quite unknown a few generations anterior to our own. Not so with leather, which is older than history, and for which, so far as we can see, no substitute can ever be found. It enters so largely into the comforts and luxuries of life, that we cannot imagine the existence of a civilization in which it should not have a place. From the trappings of the steed in the age of chivalry, to the drover's whip of to-day, it has played an important part in every movement or undertaking in which man has been engaged. It is made to enclose the productions of mind ; it protects the head of the soldier, the foot of beauty, and the limbs of childhood. The greatest philosopher, and the merest clod that bears the human form, are benefited by its uses. No army could move without it ; no great enterprise could be advanced if this article were wanting. A lively writer says, in a playful mood, that " Cæsar lived without a shirt to his back, and without glass to his windows ;" but there is no record in history to warrant the belief that he attempted to do without leather.

In view, therefore, of the permanent wants of men, Col. Pratt could see no uncertainty in the results of his extended enterprise. Besides, he was influenced by other considerations, quite as conclusive, as connected with his own interest, and even more important as subserving the best interests of the public, particularly those of his own state.

He saw that the great mart of his state, which was also the great mart of the nation, was receiving its sup-

plies of leather from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland ; that the leather business had long held a high rank as a branch of trade ; that it not only opened a broad field for the industry and energies of the state, but that it was also a source of wealth. He saw, also, that the time could not be far distant when, from the extensive and invaluable grazing lands of the state, immense flocks and herds must seek the great markets that were rapidly growing up around him ; and that, if the appropriate manufactories were not opened at home, one of the most essential as well as most extensive and valuable products from these flocks and herds must seek the aid of foreign enterprise. The question arose, "Should New York permit her great energies and facilities to lie dormant, while one of the most extensive products of the state was seeking a foreign manufactory, to foster and perfect its industry and skill, and pay an immense revenue to the wealth of other states, and then return to claim the control and the profits of her best markets ?" This was a question of much significancy to the mind of Col. Pratt. It was enough to arouse his unconquerable energy to an effort which was as essential to public as it was to private interests. He resolved to turn the tide of the market in leather, and to secure its advantages to his own great state.

The winter of 1824-5, Col. Pratt devoted a portion of his time to building a store, and collecting the materials necessary for the erection of his tannery. In all

his movements, he was his own surveyor and architect, marking out the lots, and making his own plans. On the 14th March, 1825, almost before the winter had passed, he commenced preparing his grounds for the foundations of his buildings ; and the work was pursued with such despatch, that on the 6th of June following he had completed an establishment one hundred and seventy feet long and forty-three wide,—so constructed as to be enlarged as occasion might require,—and began to put hides into his vats.

Few men have understood the best manner of making rapid progress in everything more thoroughly than did Col. Pratt. This was owing, in part, to the remarkable energy and activity of his mind, but more to the completeness of his system, his *method* of doing things. Much, indeed, was due to the course of treatment to which he ever adhered in all his intercourse with his workmen. Being himself of a strong, muscular frame, and an iron constitution, he could endure as much as the most robust of his laborers ; and, besides, he would never require another to do that which he would not do himself. His customary mode of addressing his laborers, in directing the work, was, “ *Come, let us do this or that,*” and not, “ *Go, and do this or that.*” He lived on familiar terms with them, partaking in all their fare, and bearing his full share of all the hardships to which they were exposed. He maintained his authority purely by force of the superior energy and capacity of his mind, and the universal respect and affection which he everywhere inspired. His

entire establishment almost unconsciously acquired the same habits of enterprise and activity which were so constantly exhibited by him.*

If at any time he saw a man of indolent habits among his laborers, his reproof was invariably administered in such a spirit of perfect good-nature, and ready humor, as to command in them both fear and love. His idea of the importance of economy in time, as an essential element of success, could not brook the presence of a drone anywhere in his establishment; and he always took effectual means either to cure the ill, or remove it.

On one occasion, perceiving that one of his men was strongly inclined to neglect his duty by idling away his time, he took an early opportunity to see what could be done to cure him of this vice. Under the pretence of wishing to obtain some grasshoppers for his fish-pond, he procured an old coffee-pot, and asked him to go into the field near by, and catch some of these lively insects. "O! yes, sir," said the man, taking the coffee-pot which was to hold the little prisoners, — "I'll soon have enough for you, sir." Like all other idle men, he was good at making promises. He was directed by Col. P. to a field close by, where his other men were at work. They readily understood the movement, and enjoyed the

*The effect of his example on all about him was much in accordance with the vehement exhortation of Cicero to Atticus: "If you are asleep, awake; if you are standing, move; if you are moving, run; if you are running, fly." Or, to use his own emphatic words, as indicating the constant duty of man, — "COME, GO, DO."

joke, though in silence. He was soon seen stooping and jumping (novel movements for him), and appeared to be quite absorbed in this new and childish pursuit. In attempting to save himself from falling, his motions were often awkward; and the act of carefully lifting and quickly shutting the coffee-pot cover was quite amusing. But when, with all his extraordinary activity, he showed evident signs of vexation at being unable to keep all he had caught, his labors became truly laughable. When he attempted to put one in, several would jump out; and, though slowly increasing the number, he plainly saw that it was a fatal business for a lazy man to attempt to catch grasshoppers. He paused and reflected, and sat down, as all lazy men are apt to do when opposed by obstacles. Happening to look up, however, he found himself the object of ridicule on the part of his companions. They were watching him, with fun-making attitudes, which he could not mistake; and when they joined in a hearty laugh, which they could no longer repress, he at once comprehended the joke. He sprang to his feet, and, dashing the coffee-pot to the ground, left the premises, and no more sought labor of Col. Pratt. Hence, the maxim, now so common in Prattsville, “*Work, or catch grasshoppers.*”

On another occasion, he rebuked a worthless fellow, who claimed protection for his indolence under cover of his contract. One rainy morning, Col. Pratt handed him an umbrella, and twelve shillings in money, *to pay his expenses*, and asked him to gather all the sheep-weed he

could find along the turnpike road. It is true the weed was a common nuisance, and its destruction would prove a common benefit ; but such an outfit for gathering and *saving* sheep-weed not only deceived the man himself, but puzzled others. "The labor was novel, unheard of, strange and foolish." "What could it be for?" "What's the crop?" "What's the price?" "What's the market?" and a hundred other rude speculations and questions, were rife upon the road. He was questioned, joked, jeered and laughed at, by so many people, respecting his object, that he was ashamed to be longer seen engaged in such labor ; and, half suspecting the purpose of his employer, he called for a settlement, and was glad to quit.

The good-natured methods of reform adopted by Col. Pratt exerted a salutary influence upon the men in his employ. They knew the penalty for neglect, although they could not predict the form and nature of its execution. They could withstand severity, but they surrendered to ridicule, and to the rebukes of good-nature.

The extensive preparations which Col. Pratt had made, and was making, to do an amount of business at tanning heretofore entirely unknown, either in the state or nation, compelled him to make large expenditures of money, and draw largely upon credit ; but his well-earned reputation insured to him the favor of all who knew him ; and, though he necessarily became largely indebted, he never wanted friends who were ready to give him credit.

There were a few who thought they saw danger in his

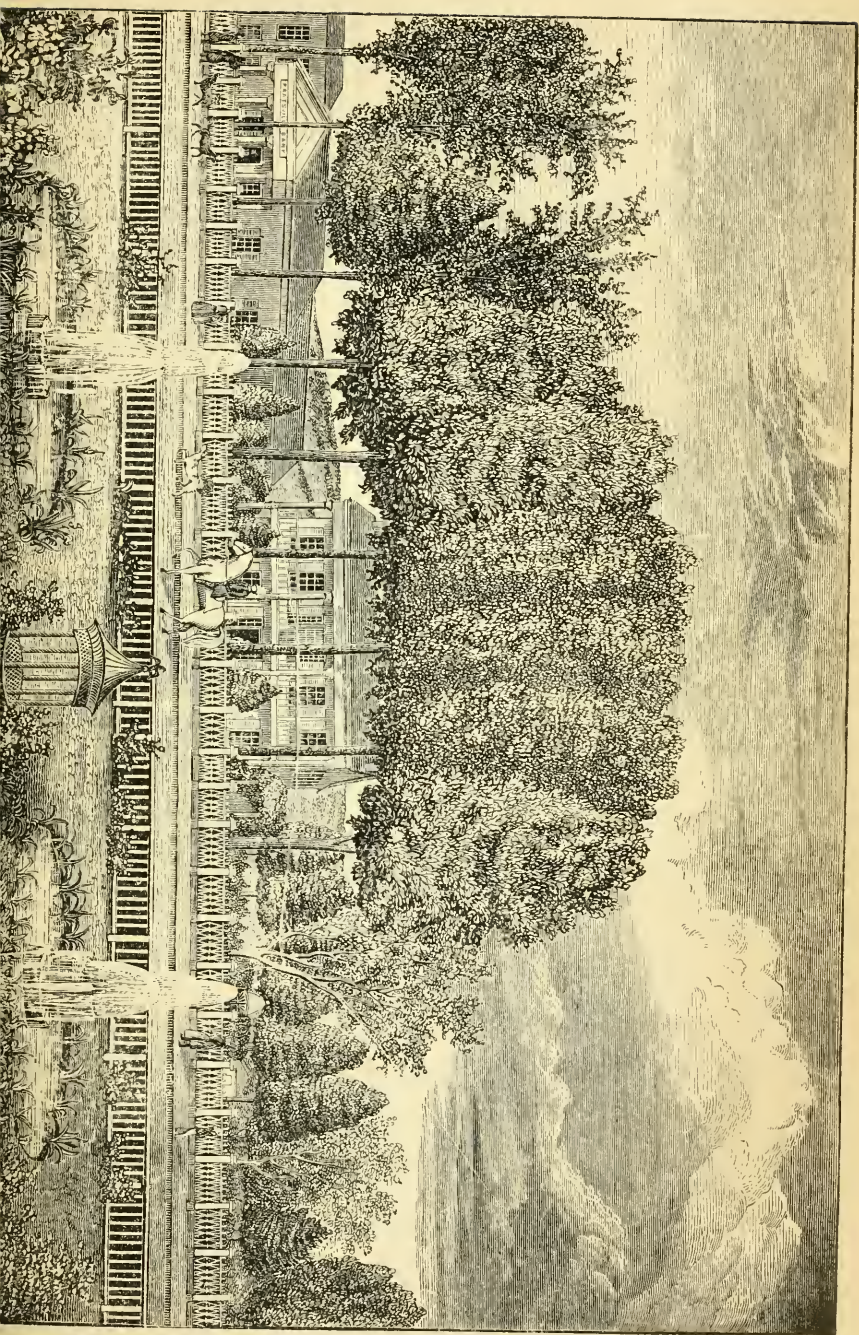
extensive plans. They looked wise, hoped for the best, but predicted ruin. But of such Col. Pratt asked no advice, courted no favors. He had predicted that the rich meadows all about him would be covered with a beautiful village. His convictions remained unchanged.

He was governed too much by the plain dictates of common sense to be easily influenced by men whose diseased vision saw danger in enterprise, and experiment in industry. He felt that time would test the prophet; and his favorite maxim, "*Mind your business,*" was early heeded with a practical sincerity.

CHAPTER V.

Early condition of Prattsville. — Effects of enterprise. — Plan of town. — Description of town. — Manner of disposing of land. — Importance of religious services. — Results of efficiency. — Clerical wisdom. — New church built — one-third is given by Col. Pratt. — Appoints Gideon Lee & Co. his agents. — Acquires wealth. — Marries a third wife. — Builds a handsome house. — New town of Prattsville incorporated. — Death of his third wife and one child. — Reflections and resolves. — Marries his fourth wife. — His domestic life. — Prompt work in building a bridge.

At the time Col. Pratt was building his tannery, the vicinity was inhabited only by a few families, who had their log cabins scattered along the banks of the Schoharie-kill. They were living in a small, quiet way, nearly, if not entirely, ignorant of the great natural resources of the country, which they were slowly redeeming from absolute wildness. The building of such an establishment started the spirit of enterprise in all directions around him. The large number of laborers, who were called together for the purpose of carrying on the business, and preparing and collecting the requisite materials from the surrounding country, must be provided with homes; and the demand for supplies of all kinds, necessary for the people, at once required the establishment of a market. Houses and stores and shops must be built. Animals must be provided for, roads made, the land divided and cultivated; and numerous other wants, both present and prospective, duly considered.



Col. Pratt saw at a glance the propriety of planning the future village ; for, although people of new countries are apt at first to look merely to the comforts of life, he was not disposed to permit order and elegance to be disregarded, where he had the power to control. As the possession of the land was in his own hands, he felt that it was his duty to see that the commencement, at least, was systematic, and of such a character as to admit of extension without unnecessary expense or inconvenience.

He first laid out, through the centre of his land, a street sixty feet wide, and nearly a mile in length, which he presented to the turnpike company. Other streets were laid out, in a manner to preserve as far as possible, and yet add to the natural beauty of the place.

Along the principal street, and on each side of it, he directed ornamental trees to be planted, which have since become one of the chief attractions and beauties of the village. This is one of the most agreeable incidents of his career. It not only discovered his perception of the beautiful, but his practical regard for posterity. The trees which he then planted are so many graceful monuments to his liberality and forethought. Their beauty and shade are preserved and increased without an artist's aid ; and every breeze that shall play upon their branches, and every tint that shall variegate their foliage, will be a tribute to his memory, long after his burial-stone shall become moss-grown, and its inscriptions obscured.

Having prepared his land for the market, by dividing it into appropriate lots, allowing liberally for side-walks, he offered it for sale. He at first contemplated making an effort to secure the good moral character of the place, by attaching restrictive conditions to the land-titles which he should give, in respect to temperance ; but, on more mature consideration, he was convinced that morality, as a positive virtue, must be the result of free choice, on the part of every one, before it can furnish any ground for real, substantial respect and confidence. Besides, it was the policy of our institutions to give a full and free title to landed property as the best means of managing individual industry and enterprise. He preferred to adhere to the old policy of his fathers, and use the instrumentalities of the church and the school to accomplish all objects of reform.

In disposing of his land, many a poor man, who had not anticipated the fortune of having, at present, any title to a home of his own, was afforded one on terms which he could easily meet. To men of correct habits, of industry and morals, he was most liberal in his inducements to settle about him. In him all were sure to find a generous creditor and an honorable friend united.

At the time Col. Pratt commenced his work at Schoharie-kill, there was in that vicinity a small, old, dilapidated church, belonging to the Dutch Reformed Society, in which religious services were held every third Sabbath, under the direction of Rev. Mr. Page, who had, at the same time, two other churches under his care. One Sab-

bath in three was all that was granted to this little community.

Col. Pratt, though a member of no church, had never forgotten those early instructions of a pious mother, who taught him to reverence the Sabbath and the institutions of religion. The observations of his maturer life, and his more extensive acquaintance with the world, had convinced him that much of the power of the Sabbath over the moral character of society is to be found in a regular and reverent observance of its appropriate exercises. He regarded the devoting of one day in every seven to the moral and religious development of man as a wise and philosophic arrangement, and necessary to advance the best interests of society. He saw no particular reason why the soul should be deprived of its aliment, more than the body. We cannot eat and drink to-day for to-morrow, nor to-morrow for next week ; but each day for itself, according to our wants and condition. To have preaching but one-third of the time, seemed to him to be a practical admission that it might be dispensed with entirely. He did not believe in the wisdom of that economy which saved only at the expense of duty. He saw no consistency in the adoption of a system of improvement which precluded one of the best means of success. The elements of prosperity, to his mind, necessarily embraced all the circles of duty ; and he had the greatest confidence in the practice of those principles which were deemed the most sacred. To a new town, considerations like these he deemed of vital importance ; for, an error

at the beginning of growth multiplies into a certain cause of premature decay. A wrong beginning is a surrender before battle. There is more progress in a single right step than in a thousand wrong ones, and the loss of opportunity to do good is consenting to evil. Entertaining such views, he did not hesitate to express his readiness to coöperate with the people to have a resident minister, whose labors should be constant and undivided ; and a society that should be able to realize a continuity of being. With him, thinking was acting. He immediately proposed that a new house of worship should be built, and a minister settled. It is true the expense would be greatly increased ; — “ but,” said he, “ you can better afford to pay five hundred dollars and have *a society*, than to pay one hundred and have none.”

The proposition was received with general favor ; for, although some were at a loss as to the source of *ways and means*, all united with earnestness in the proposed plan. Not so, however, thought Mr. Page, who was the officiating clergyman for one-third of the time. He saw in the movement a prelude to schism in the church, and great danger to the society. The past, in their history, proved the folly of this new suggestion. He inquired, with a significant tone of warning, and prophetic solemnity, “ if they supposed themselves able to bear the expenses of stated preaching the year through, when they had found it difficult to pay the small sum stipulated to be paid him !” “ I warn you,” he continued, “ I warn you, my brethren, against uncertain experiments. It is

better to take counsel of the past than of this *stranger* who has come among us. He speaks of doing great things, but I see nothing but danger in his plan.”

Not satisfied with an opposition on suitable occasions, he carried the subject into the pulpit; and on the Sabbath rebuked his hearers for listening to the absurd propositions of the “stranger.” His language indicated temper, and his spirit insult. Col. Pratt, the “stranger” alluded to, was present, to witness and to hear the preacher. He was not moved by the irritating remarks of the speaker, in the slightest degree. He smiled at his apparent earnestness, but he felt no disposition to be severe upon one whose confidence in his own conceit was greater than his knowledge of principles.

Subsequently, at a meeting of the society, Col. Pratt disclaimed all unkind motives in regard to Mr. Page, — all wish to produce schism. It was not his purpose to excite the people against their minister; he only desired constantly the happy and salutary influences of the teachings and the example of a man of God among them. He confessed that, although he had strong convictions of duty upon this subject, and felt that they all stood in a most responsible position to coming generations, still, he had no desire to dictate who the man should be, or what should be the conditions of his settlement. This matter was one upon which the society alone could decide. He assured them that any earnest, devoted and pious man should receive his hearty coöperation and support. If

he were a "stranger," he had cast his lot among them, and had no selfish motives to gratify.

These conciliatory remarks led Mr. Page to propose an engagement for one-half of the time. But to this Mr. Pratt made his objections. He could see no propriety in tolerating, in any degree, an evil, which, by proper determination might be wholly removed. His advice was followed; a minister was settled, and they found less difficulty in paying him a salary of four hundred dollars, than they had in raising the small sum of one hundred and twenty dollars, which they had paid Mr. Page.

Not long after this, a new church was erected by the society, more suited to the demands of the village, towards which Col. Pratt contributed one-third of the requisite funds.

With a view to take advantage of the market, and more successfully to compete with the manufacturers of other states, Mr. Pratt made business arrangements with the firm of Gideon Lee & Co., extensive leather-dealers in the city of New York; and they continued to do his business for more than fifteen years, much to his satisfaction and advantage. Their system of doing business was adjusted according to settled principles. They were liberal in their accommodations, strict in adhering to terms, and prudent in their risks. They kept up with the times, without incurring the danger of outrunning them; and while others were in the whirlpool of speculation, they were pursuing a safe and legitimate trade, and had the power to control sales for the best interests of the manufacturer.

From 1825 to 1835, Colonel Pratt was most actively engaged in business transactions. During this period, he accumulated a large part of his extensive fortune.

In 1827, he was elected supervisor of the town of Windham.

Having now lived more than three years like one of his own men, with no home of his own,—a boarder among his laborers,—and finding himself once more fairly and prosperously established in the world, he sought again the comforts and encouragements of domestic life; and, on the 12th of October, 1827, married his third wife, Miss Abigail P. Watson, daughter of Wheeler Watson, Esq., of Rensselaerville, an accomplished lady, and combining all that is beautiful in character.

The following year, he built his house,—the tasteful mansion which stands near the centre of the village; and which, in its location, its arrangements, and its adornments, bespeaks alike the liberality of his views, his skill in uniting utility and just proportions, and his appreciation of the important offices which a good and correct taste performs, in giving to all higher civilization its elegance, and its real substantial refinement.

The edifice is surrounded by gardens on three sides, while on the lawn in front are numerous hickory and maple trees, which were planted by Colonel Pratt, in 1829. The lawn in front is embellished with an elegant *jet d'eau*, and two well-stocked fish-ponds. The gardens are in beautiful order, and they excite increased interest

from the fact that they have been mostly cultivated by the hand of woman.

Here he had, at length, cast his last anchor for the remainder of life, without hope or purpose of change. His substantial interests had become inseparably incorporated both with the existence and growth of the village. He sought to make it the centre of influence for the people about him ; for, the more extended its intercourse with the world and with business men, the more important it became to the farmer, the mechanic, the merchant, and the professional man even, when viewed in connection with their several callings. This was politic, even had he been disposed to consult his individual interests alone ; but the policy appears still wiser and more dignified, when viewed in its relation to public interests.

But a new question arose. The disadvantages and inconveniences of a village at a distance from the centre of town influences and privileges became a matter for serious consideration. The new village was fast assuming importance as a part of the town, in consequence of the rapid increase of its population, and the wealth that was fast accumulating in its vicinity. It was evident that these inconveniences, involving, as they did, a very serious expense of both time and money, could not long be permitted to continue. They were of too much magnitude to be carelessly passed over by one who was as attentive to the wants of the community as to his own. Besides this, the town of Windham, of which Schoharie-

kill was a part, embraced a territory, it was thought, sufficiently large to admit of being divided into two towns, very much to the convenience, if not to the advantage, of all parties. Indeed, that such a view was a reasonable one, may be inferred from the fact that it has since been divided into five.

Colonel Pratt early foresaw that, in the course of things, a division of the town was becoming necessary ; and, being fully aware of the jealousy with which an old town adheres to its original charter limits, he sought to break the force of the opposition which would most probably be made to a sudden application for a separate incorporation, by preparing the people to expect it. They must regard it as something to be expected in the future ; and, though some might not agree with him in the policy of the movement, still, he considered that it would result greatly to the pecuniary as well as social and moral benefit of all. He viewed the matter of town limits as an item worthy of very deliberate consideration, in its relation to the police regulations of the town.

The advance of civilization in a new country, or any other, is continually revealing the fact, that distance is a very serious matter, when corporate and police duties are required of the citizen, whose efficiency depends so much upon his ability to secure their prompt execution. A certain compactness is as necessary to the thrift and social condition of a town, as it is to the more limited operations of associated labor, or of individuals. A personal presence and continuity of effort, on the part of the

citizens, seem necessary to give the town a real identity, and to keep alive a proper public spirit. That the territory of Windham, with its sectional interests and sectional pride, was too large for the convenience and best good of the people, no prudent man could entertain a reasonable doubt.

The efforts of Colonel Pratt were unceasing to secure to his village those privileges which, while they wrought no wrong to the rest of his townsmen, did great service to the more immediate vicinity. And yet, in all of his special endeavors, there appeared such a generosity of sentiment and honesty of purpose, that all — both those who advocated and those who opposed his measures — were forced to award to him that confidence and profound regard which such a self-devoting man everywhere commands.

That they might make some little acknowledgment of their sense of obligation to him, and make it in a manner that should give permanency to the expression of their gratitude, the citizens of the vicinity, in their petition for a division of Windham, and the incorporation of a new town, prayed that it might bear the name of Prattsville, in honor of its founder.

Prattsville was incorporated in 1832, with a population of one thousand five hundred, eight years after Colonel Pratt had first removed to the comparatively unreclaimed forest, carrying with him all his effects in a one-horse wagon.

He had now achieved a signal conquest over the wild

region of the Catskill. He had subdued nature by the sweat of his own brow, and felt that he was in some degree worthy of those rich rewards which she so pertinaciously withholds from everything but industry and toil. He heard the fierce screams of the panther and the savage bark of the wolf dying away over the distant hills, as they surrendered, unconditionally and forever, to the claims of civilized life, their title to the control of the tenantless forest. He saw the master-hand of enterprise bring out, in strong and elegant *alto-relievo*, upon that so recently rugged field, the perfected design of his own mind, — a new town, with its prosperity, its elegances and its comforts. He saw his fellow-citizens voluntarily and proudly handing down to future generations his own name in grateful and perpetual remembrance.

While thus in the full tide of his prosperity, enjoying the confidence and esteem of all who knew him, and blessed with a home which was all that the affection and devotion of a wife, and the interesting children she had borne him, could make it, he became a third time a mourner for the loss of his wife, who died February 5, . 1834, leaving behind one son and two daughters. Often as he had before felt the mourner's sad experience, this loss brought with it trials unlike any he had before experienced. Through the most active business portion of his life he had found much comfort and solace in the bosom of an affectionate family. The prudent counsels and ready sympathies of his wife had given him the strongest encouragements in the midst of cares, and

urged him on to a course of noble doing, while they relieved life of all its hardships and sorrows. He had lost not a wife only, but the mother of his children. He must share their grief, and live to be a daily witness of their loss, by the death of a kind and devoted mother. She was a lady graced by rare endowments of nature; adorned with all the accomplishments which give beauty to character, and bliss to life; and gifted with a superior judgment, which was ever exercised in the spirit of love, and characterized by the loftiest purposes. The circumstances of his life offered no mitigating change to which he could resort; and, if anything was wanting to complete the bitterness of his cup, it seemed to be realized, when, a short time after the death of his wife, he was called to deplore the loss of one of his daughters.

When the first shock was past, and his calmer judgment permitted to return, he saw that these things were not designed for his overthrow, but to hallow his aspirations and efforts, and sanctify his life. The field was open, and the remembrance of the calm and suggestive counsels of his wife bade him enter for still higher achievements.

He was now in the prime of his life, with his powers both of body and of mind in their full vigor. With him the object of living was to be useful; and he was accustomed to say, "He that makes money wisely lives for the good of mankind." He had honors yet to win; and he had the satisfaction of seeing a community eager to bestow them, as an appreciation of his high motives.

He saw his fortune rapidly accumulating ; and, to the influence of personal character, he was fast adding the sure influence of extensive wealth. He had continued to add to his originally extensive tannery both capacity and skill of workmanship, and advanced the quality of his manufactures till they had become in the market the criterion of excellence. These things not only served constantly to increase his means, but enabled him to devote more of his time to subjects of public interest. While he saw the danger of a depraved and selfish ambition, he was not so blind to duty, as many are, as to deery a high and honorable one. His knowledge of wrong taught him the necessity of action. To surrender to a strong and noble antagonist, who claims a victory because he has fairly won it, is a result which must happen to some ; but it is not regarded as dishonorable to any. But, to surrender the right to *do good* to those who are unworthy of confidence, because we have a distaste for political contests with men not entitled to our respect, is a double wrong to society. We not only deprive the public of the services of an honest servant, but permit a dishonest one to fill his place.

Colonel Pratt had early adopted it, as one of the rules of his action, to regard himself, in all stages of his success, as a steward, to whose keeping both his wealth and all other means of influence had been committed, to be used to promote the general welfare, and especially to relieve the hardships and necessities of the poor and unfortunate.

Having remained a widower somewhat more than a year, he married his fourth wife, Miss Mary E. Watson, a sister of his last wife, March 16, 1835. When speaking of his married life to a friend, Colonel Pratt said, "It has very rarely fallen to the lot of man to say that he has had three of the best women for his wives, and that he is now living with the fourth, equally good. It may most truly be said of my deceased wives, that they were Christian companions, with whom I have lived in the greatest conjugal happiness ; and of my present most estimable consort, that she is every way worthy to succeed them in the affections of a devoted husband, and every way calculated to promote his happiness." He soon found, in his fourth wife, that loftiness of aim and purity of purpose which would nobly second the various plans of usefulness which were to occupy his future life. Amiable and accomplished, she imparts to his circle that sunshine of cheerfulness which ever characterizes the spirit of enlightened content ; and, with intelligence that charms while it informs, she modestly appreciates her own position of usefulness, and is alive to every call of duty.

It may not be deemed inappropriate, in this connection, to quote the opinion of one of the greatest men of modern times, as to the great importance of domestic felicity to public men. At a public meeting in Ireland, held in honor of Mr. O'Connell, in responding to a complimentary sentiment to his lady, he said, "That the cares of a public man may be easily borne, if his home

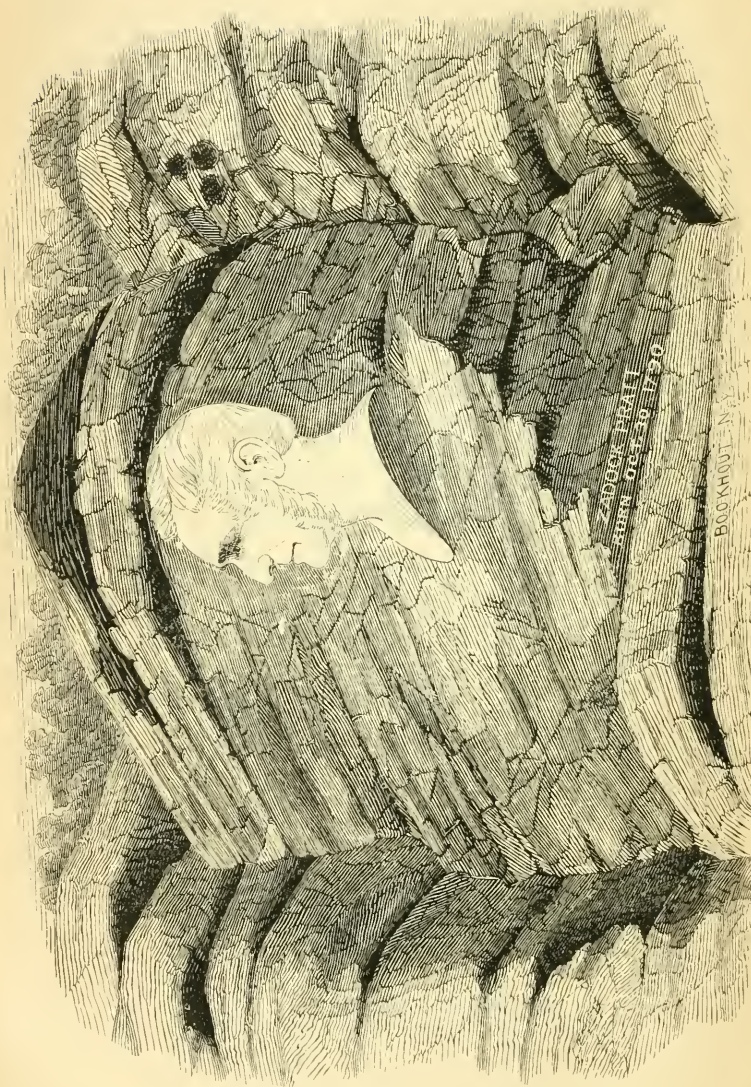
be a happy one,—a place to which he may retreat from the storms of strife and passion. If,” he added, “I have accomplished anything as a public man, it may be attributed, in a great measure, to the happiness of my home.” To this may be added the language of Colonel Pratt. He is accustomed to say: “If a man has a cheerful spirit, a reasonable mind, an honest heart, a love for labor, and a happy home, he knows no failure, and is discouraged by no obstacle.”

The town which he has founded is full of monuments to his labors.

In 1836, the bridge across the Schoharie-kill was carried away by the ice. Its loss occasioned great inconvenience, which seemed to admit of no immediate remedy. To rebuild it was a work of time; but how to obviate the temporary inconvenience was the question to be instantly met and decided. No one suffered more by this loss than Colonel Pratt, and it was characteristic of him to devise means for its immediate reconstruction. He everywhere found, as he thought, an over-estimate of the difficulties attending the building of another bridge. It was mid-winter; and, though it was out of the course of his business, yet he resolved to try what he could do to restore the accommodations to the public with as little delay as possible. In less than six hours after it was carried away, Colonel Pratt had entered into a contract to rebuild it, on a much improved plan, and have it completed in two weeks. Such a thing was declared impossible. But he esteemed it a plain matter, and

easily understood. On applying to the man whom he wished to engage as master-workman, he was told that, with the snow three feet deep in the woods, from which the timber was to be obtained, the undertaking was so very desperate that he would lose his money by the contract. “Very well,” said the colonel, smiling, “I have never yet undertaken an enterprise which I did not accomplish. You will receive your pay, if I do not mine. The work must go on. It can be done. It must be done.”

The work was commenced, and completed in eleven days, without the aid of ardent spirits; and he had the pleasure of seeing a bridge one hundred and thirty feet long strongly and handsomely finished,—as much to the wonder of the people as to the relief of travellers.



Bust of the Hon. Zadock Pratt, A. M. (Tanner,) on the Rocks in Pratisville, N. Y.

CHAPTER VI.

Business pursuits. — A friend to religion. — A new church built. — His liberality. — Receives a silver medal from the New York Institute, for the best sole-leather. — Promotes education. — Elected honorary member of the American Institute, and of other societies. — Delivers an address before the Catskill Mechanic Society. — Petitions for a new county. — Offers to pay for county buildings. — Printing-press established in Prattsville. — Colonel Pratt's generous welcome to the Baptists. — His characteristics. — The credit system. — Means of success. — Establishes a bank in Prattsville. — His character as a banker. — Anecdotes. — His endorsements. — Advice to young traders.

FROM 1836, Colonel Pratt's career assumes a new feature, and we no longer see him as the mere man of business. Henceforth he appears before the country as a politician and statesman. What a man does for himself, in the way of business, is one thing; what he accomplishes as a public servant, quite another. We shall, therefore, delineate these two features of his character separately. By pursuing this course, we can better understand the means of his success, his capacity for progress, and his unity of purpose. With this view, his career as a citizen and as a man of business will first be completed.

In 1837, he received a vote of thanks from the stewards of the Methodist Church, in the Prattsville circuit, "for his benevolence in the support of the Gospel."

In the rapid growth of the town, it became necessary, as well as politic, to provide further accommodations for

religious worship. The Methodist denomination having become quite numerous, and being without any suitable place for religious services, it was determined to make an effort to erect an appropriate house for that purpose. Most of the members of that denomination were of limited means, and their success depended much upon the liberality of citizens who were connected with other societies. The character of the movement, and the real wants of the town, recommended it to the favor and support of all who sought the public good. No one was more active in this than Colonel Pratt; and, although not a member either of the church or society, he manifested his usual liberality, by subscribing to the amount of one-third of the whole expense of the house, and subsequently presenting to the church and society a parsonage. Since that time, he has aided them with a subscription of from fifty to one hundred and fifty dollars annually. "Each man for himself," he would say, "according to what he is fitted to accomplish, to do much or little. Let every man do *what he can do, well*. What he cannot do well, let him have the good sense to leave to others. So of societies. So of religion. Men believe differently; and they *feel better and do better*, if they are permitted to have entire freedom in all matters of religion. When I help the church, I help the country."

In 1837, the American Institute, New York, at the fair held in that city, in distributing premiums for the best specimens of American manufactures, awarded to

the Prattsville tannery the first silver medal ever given in America for the best specimen of hemlock-tanned sole-leather.

The Prattsville tannery had thus, in the course of twelve years, grown up in the forest, entered its articles for competition in the market, and risen, by the force of skill and industry, to the first rank among American tanneries.

Again, in 1846, Colonel Pratt received the first premium and a diploma at the New York State Agricultural Society. He now saw the full accomplishment of his original design, so far as to secure to his native state the command of her own great market.

In pursuance of the liberal policy which he originally adopted, with a view to advance the interests of the village, Colonel Pratt early made strenuous and earnest efforts to place the means of education on the most permanent basis, with advantages and facilities of the most liberal kind. Later, in 1839, he offered to give five thousand dollars towards the establishment of an academy of the highest order in Prattsville, to be under the direction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, provided a like sum should be contributed for the same object from other sources ; but, unfortunately for the cause of education and the welfare of the place, the required five thousand dollars could not be raised, and the generous project failed.

In 1839, he was elected a member of the American Institute, at New York. In August, 1841, he received

a similar honor from the "CATSKILL MECHANIC SOCIETY." The following year, he was invited to give an address to the Catskill Society; which he delivered December 29, 1842. The address was published by the society. In requesting a copy for publication, the committee say, that "it is calculated to render essential and important benefit to young mechanics, who are just entering on the stage of action." It exhibits in a strong light that sound practical common sense for which the author is particularly distinguished.*

In 1841, the inhabitants of Prattsville began to realize, in common with the inhabitants of the adjoining towns, very serious inconveniences from being at so great a distance from the centre of the county business,—Prattsville being more than thirty miles from the nearest county town. It seemed highly important, therefore, that measures should be taken to have a new county incorporated, by taking a portion of those towns similarly situated, and to make for them a new centre. This could be done so as to lessen at least one-half the distance for the people to travel for the transaction of their county business.†

The towns to be accommodated by such an arrangement were Prattsville, Lexington, Windham, Broome, Conesville, Middletown, Blenheim and Roxbury, with

* It will be found in the second part of this volume.

† A statement of facts was made and printed by Colonel Pratt, remarkable for its simplicity and comprehensiveness, which will be found in the second part of this volume.

an aggregate population of eighteen thousand inhabitants, which was larger than the average of twenty counties in the state. The face of the country was favorable to this arrangement, since most of the towns lay along those streams which were tributary to the Schoharie-kill, and presented peculiar facilities for some central communication in that vicinity. This would lessen very much the expenses of the individual towns, as well as of those persons whose callings led them to engage most largely in county business. Under these considerations, application was made, in 1841, to the Legislature, for a new county. The reasons for this were presented and urged with peculiar force. Colonel Pratt entered heartily into this movement, because he thought the change was demanded both by policy and common justice. For once he failed to accomplish the desired object; but for reasons which were beyond his power to control.

In 1846, application was made a second time, on the ground of a great increase both of business and population. It was objected that the burden of erecting the requisite buildings could not well be borne by the new county, and other reasons were urged against the practicability of the measure. So far as the requisite buildings were concerned, Colonel Pratt went forward, and generously offered to build the court-house and the clerk's office, at his own expense, on such site and in such manner as the commissioners should direct. But

generous offers did not overcome opposing obstacles, and this second application met the fate of the first.

There are few acts, even in the life of Colonel Pratt, which exhibit his public spirit in a more honorable light than these efforts to procure the incorporation of a new county for the convenience of the people. They show how entirely his purse was at the service of any object which his heart and his judgment approved.

The rapid growth of Prattsville, together with its prospects of future increase, constantly invited the attention of all who were about to engage in business, and were seeking a location which presented desirable facilities for success. Its characteristic activity and resources had given it a reputation which pointed it out as destined to become, in the course of a few years, the central source of important influences in that vicinity.

In 1842, a printing-press was established in Prattsville, under the direction of the Baptist Publication Society. This society had formerly carried on their operations in Lexington; but, finding the location more convenient, and the facilities for doing business greater, in Prattsville, they determined to remove their office to the latter place. Soon after this, their operations were much enlarged and facilitated by the addition of a stereotype foundery, and other improvements.

This gave occasion for the exhibition of Colonel Pratt's liberality towards the maintenance of religious institutions, which discovered that, though he entertained a profound and controlling regard for religion,

yet he was no sectarian in the non-essentials of church discipline.

In alluding to the aid received from Colonel Pratt at this time, Rev. L. L. Hill, in a letter published in the "*New York Baptist Advocate*," said: "In process of time, it was thought best to enlarge operations, by the addition of facilities for stereotyping, and other expensive improvements. For greater convenience, the establishment was removed from this place to the pleasant town of Prattsville. In that place there is no Baptist church; but the Dutch Reformed and Methodist brethren, as well as the citizens at large, gave that 'wonder among the mountains,' the printing-office, a hearty welcome. Most liberally, too, did they patronize the library, all Baptist as it is. I would further state, that the Honorable Zadock Pratt, now member of Congress, opened his purse to the amount of some four thousand dollars, by way of loan, without interest, in meeting the great expenses of the concern, besides donating the rent of an office and two dwelling-houses. He is not a professor of religion, but more than once has said to me to the effect, 'Your operations are of great importance, and should be liberally patronized by your own denomination, and the entire Christian community: my purse is open — help yourself.' I would not speak with a view to compliment only, but would render him an act of justice. He has, I trust, had the same prayer made for him that Paul made for Onesiphorus."

In 1842, several of the citizens of Prattsville com-

bined to build a house suitable for an academy. It was built of brick, and cost between three and four thousand dollars, one-half of which was liberally paid by Colonel Pratt. Here it was the design of the projectors that the higher branches of the sciences and the classics should be taught.

It was a striking feature of Colonel Pratt's character, that, in whatever respect he was successful, he noted the means employed, that he might communicate the information for the good of others. He had profited by the credit system; and, with proper restrictions, he regarded it good advice to recommend its adoption to others. He considered that the man who lends his credit to his neighbor as truly lends him an instrument of power, as he who lends him his ox to plough his field. We do not mean, therefore, that every man would be justified in promising himself riches by borrowing. The credit system, properly limited and managed, doubtless encourages skill, industry and enterprise. When carried to the extreme, it cannot prove otherwise than injurious and fatal. Its legitimate effect is simply to place men of no means in relation to property, that they may add to its value by labor. If they hope to succeed upon any other principle, they will be disappointed. If they adopt the credit system to avail themselves of chance bargains, they are soon brought to realize the fact that no gains are certain but those of labor and of economy. All others are likely to prove ruinous. The great secret is, to know the true scale of

adjustment,—what degree of credit to adopt with a given amount of labor. Excess of credit is exceedingly hazardous; excess of labor, or of production, is comparatively a minor evil, and may be readily corrected without much sacrifice. Few men understood this better than Colonel Pratt. He had passed through a severe ordeal; and it is a crowning merit of his life, that, though he had reached the “topmost round of young ambition’s ladder,” he did not turn his back upon that ladder, nor

“Scorn the base degrees
By which he did ascend.”

He was ever ready to pay the noblest tribute of gratitude for what he enjoyed, by employing the full power of his fortune and his place to relieve the hardships of the honest and industrious poor, and furnish facilities for the improvement of their condition. He never predicated his own honor and success upon the downfall and ruin of others. The field was broad enough to permit all to rise and succeed; and the success of others he regarded as a powerful persuasive to increased exertions, and not an incentive to envy and jealousy. Consequently, we always find Colonel Pratt adopting those measures which the welfare of all seemed to require. He saw that everything which added to the good character and prosperity of the town was a new source of wealth and influence to himself, while it added greatly to the comfort and success of others.

He had a large fortune at his command, which he had acquired in that vicinity. He saw how powerful an

engine it might be made, to increase the prosperity of the town, by being judiciously managed to extend the field of prudent enterprise. He saw that the want of means and facilities for obtaining the requisite funds, either in one's own right or upon trust, often cramped, and not unfrequently entirely paralyzed, the most desirable and commendable undertakings.

As the promises of future prosperity seemed to authorize the trial, he resolved to establish a bank, under the general banking law of the state, and thus introduce into the place a system of credit which should call out the full energies of the people. Accordingly, he established the Prattsville Bank, in 1843, with a capital of fifty thousand dollars, which was increased, the following year, to one hundred thousand dollars. The capital was secured by vesting fifty thousand dollars in six and seven per cent. stocks of the State of New York, and fifty thousand dollars in six per cent. stocks of the United States. He made its bills redeemable at par in the city of New York, which places the bank upon a par with the best banks in the country, and relieves it from all the embarrassments which speculators might otherwise throw in its way. In fact, this bank is the only one out of the city, in the Empire State, except those in the towns located directly on the Hudson river, whose bills are redeemed, at par, in Wall-street. For the purpose of showing the real condition of the bank, we have inserted in this volume such documents as will

give the reader a complete history of its origin and doings.

This bank is located at a distance of thirty-two miles from any other bank, and affords great business facilities to the people in that vicinity. Its success and its influence for good show how much can be done by a single individual, who is actuated by high and commendable motives.

By means of this bank, a new source of activity was opened. Thither were drawn many of the more active business men of that vicinity, for the transaction of business with the bank; and, in a very considerable degree, the movements of monied men became controlled or modified by the doings of the institution.

In his new character as banker, Colonel Pratt, while he maintained the same rigid system and energetic promptness which characterized all his doings, never lost any of his urbanity of manner, or of the open-hearted generosity for which he was well known. If an honest man, in want, applied to him for relief, he ever thought more of relieving him than of the loan by which he did it; and yet his was not a misguided sympathy or kindness. He believed that honesty would necessarily lead to industry, if prudently encouraged; and that kind words should ever accompany the act of loaning money. There are many instances, in his history as a banker, which serve to show how much more he yielded to the authority of principle than to any sordid or miserly love of gain.

On one occasion, a stranger was passing through the town, at a distance from his home, on his way to market, with one hundred and eighty head of cattle; and, in consequence of circumstances which were unforeseen by him, had exhausted his funds before reaching the place of his destination. He was obliged to seek for a loan from some source. With this view, he called at the Prattsville Bank; and, on inquiring for the president, was directed to Colonel Pratt, who was in another part of the room. He made known his want, and requested the loan of one hundred dollars, for a short time. Colonel Pratt, at a glance, saw that the man was honest, and said to the cashier, "Let this stranger have one hundred dollars; he has an honest face, and we can trust him." "But," said the man, "you do not know my name yet, sir!" "Very well," said the colonel, "we shall learn that when you sign the note," and immediately left him to receive the money from the cashier. The prompt return of the money by the stranger confirmed the favorable opinion of his integrity.

On another occasion, while attending to the loading of some wood, a man came to Colonel Pratt, and presenting a note, asked *if he would discount it for him*.

"I am very sorry, my friend," said the colonel, in a very kind manner, to him, "but money is so scarce, just now, I cannot conveniently do it."

The disappointed man took the note, and, on turning to leave, saw that a stick of wood had fallen from the cart where it belonged. He immediately took it up and

replaced it. Colonel Pratt observing it, read at once the character of the man for kindness and system; and he resolved to submit to the inconvenience himself, rather than, to allow the burden to rest on one who was less able to bear it. He called the man back. "I perceive, sir," said he, "that you are inclined to do good, and you shall have the money to do it with."

It would very naturally be supposed that a practice, which seemed to be as much under the control of kindness and generosity as calm, calculating judgment, would scarcely be a safe one to be introduced into general use, as it certainly is liable to expose the individual to very frequent as well as very heavy losses. Yet with Colonel Pratt it was safe, and generally successful; because what seemed only an act of pure kindness on his part, was really dictated by sound judgment and foresight. His knowledge of character made many things safe and practicable with him which would have been hazardous if attempted by others.

He did not confine himself, in his acts of usefulness, to his own means, but frequently gave the use of his name when he had no money at command. In the course of ten years of his business life, it is said that he endorsed paper for others to the amount of five hundred thousand dollars, and received four hundred protests; yet his loss did not exceed two thousand dollars in the aggregate, — a sum which he could probably well afford to pay, for the increase of business and influence which such favors brought him.

In speaking of the practice of endorsing, he said :

“It is a poor way to live, and a still poorer way to make money ; though, in some cases, it cannot be avoided in business ; and a man, to have friends, must show himself friendly.”

Much of his advice, given to young men about entering upon business, is peculiar and valuable, as we shall have occasion to notice hereafter.

We cannot forbear to state, in this place, a fact, which is worthy to be recorded in deep-wrought letters of gold, in all the commercial cities of the nation.

Although Colonel Pratt has loaned and re-loaned, within a few years, many millions of dollars, he has in no case ever taken more than legal interest. In speaking of the subject of usury, he said: “Why should I conspire with another, that he may be robbed with impunity, because it is by his own consent ? If a poor man pays exorbitant interest, he is allowed to become the means of loss to others ; if a rich man pays it, he not only deceives himself, but sets a pernicious example, by violating laws which he is obligated as a good citizen to sustain. No ! my motto is ‘To live and let live ;’ and I agree with the distinguished banker of London (Baring), who remarked that his safety as a lender required that the borrower should always make a reasonable profit on his transactions.”



View Tablet on Rock, in Prattsville, N. Y

CHAPTER VII.

Colonel Pratt's interest in agriculture. — His farm. — Improvement of stock. — Elected President of Greene County Agricultural Society. — Donation to ditto. — Great agricultural Fair at Cairo. — Appearance of the tanners. — Delivers an address before the society. — Extracts. — Fair at Windham, 1847. — Elected honorary member of several associations in different states. — Fire in the city of Hudson. — Prompt charity. — Respect for the Sabbath. — New Episcopal church built in Prattsville. — Liberal aid of Colonel Pratt. — Sculptured rocks of Prattsville. — Poetical and grateful sentiments. — Description of Prattsville rocks. — Wishes in respect to his last repose. — Elected corresponding member of Franklin Institute, and honorary member of other societies. — Letter on tanning. — Interesting statistics of Prattsville. — Growth of cities. — Causes of prosperity. — Literary attainments. — Public addresses. — Complimentary notices. — Travels, with his son, in the Southern and Western States. — His children — their travels. — Elected honorary member of the New York Historical Society. — Receives degree of Master of Arts from Union College. — Anecdotes. — Elected President of New York Mechanic Institute — delivers an address. — His character as a lecturer. — Appointed a delegate to the World's Fair, by Governor Fish. — His contribution to the World's Fair. — Examples of noble generosity. — High compliment of the stone-cutters. — Washington.

IN supplying the demands of his great tannery, Colonel Pratt gradually caused to be cleared ten thousand acres of land, in the vicinity of Prattsville ; and upon the outskirts of the village he had a large and highly improved farm, which he was in the habit of managing in connection with the business of his trade.

There is a strong tendency in the mind of every true

man to the pursuits of rural life, and they have been hallowed by the great and the good of all ages.

“Those who labor in the earth,” said Jefferson, “are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he had made a peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue.”

The habits, tastes and sentiments of Colonel Pratt conspired to render agriculture to his mind a subject of the most delightful interest. He was a great lover of nature. He was among the first to discover the opening beauties of spring, and to impart a cheerfulness to others around him in harmony with all reviving things. He looked with reverence and admiration upon the bounteous earth, teeming with living causes to produce numberless comforts and luxuries for the use of man. It was to him a sacred book, to be read and understood. He loved the farmer. He loved the farm. Indeed, agriculture was to him always a most grateful subject.*

When a boy, he was ever in the fields, and on the farm; and ere he was twelve years of age, he was capable of handling, with tolerable skill, all the agricultural

* He used to repeat the following lines, as expressive of his views of agricultural life :

“The rich donations of a fruitful soil
Nobly reward the hardy tiller’s toil ;
The garden, orchard, mead, and favorite field,
The choicest products of the season yield,
And give, to swell the cultivator’s store,
All that man wants, — and monarch needs no more.
Well sung the bard, ‘Did they their blessings know,
Farmers are far the happiest wights below.’ ”

implements then in use. At that time, but very few farmers conducted their operations upon an enlarged or scientific scale. Crop followed crop, in rotation; and when improvements were suggested, the answer was always ready, that "What answered for their fathers would do for them."* The inquiring mind of Colonel Pratt did not allow him to be satisfied so easily as his neighbors; and, while yet a youth, he improved to a great degree a farm, from which he had the misfortune to be ejected by his landlord, who, seeing the increased value of his land, rented it to those who could pay a better price. Singular as it may appear, this incident had no other effect upon the subject of our sketch than to impress him with the necessity of renewed exertion; though his time had been lost, and his all had been taken away, he cherished no enmity, but made the remark, that "*the highest duty of life is to be useful; and that if he himself did not reap the reward of his labors, others would.*"

At this period of his life (1836), he had already acquired means sufficient to admit of his retiring from the more active duties of business, and devoting a portion of his time, in dignified leisure, to the study of science and art in their higher branches, and especially in their practical application to agriculture. Being

* In the spirit of the Scotch mother, who, according to Sir Walter, nearly a century ago, objected to her son's using what she called a "new-fangled machine for dighting the grain from the chaff; thus impiously thwarting the will of Divine Providence, by raising wind for her ladyship's own particular use, by human art, instead of soliciting it by prayers," &c.

preëminently a practical man, he took special pleasure in making agricultural experiments upon principles revealed by recent discoveries. In fencing, in draining, in combining and reducing soils, he took a deep interest. As a result of his fondness for these things, he soon brought one of his farms, which at first produced but one ton of hay to the acre, to produce, on an average, three tons; and this by his own personal labor and direction.

He paid special attention to the improvement of cattle, horses and sheep, by importing, at great expense, the best breeds of each, and by cross-breeding, — having, at times, upon his farms, a hundred head of cattle, of different kinds.*

He early became a member of the Greene County Agricultural Society; and in 1844, while absent from home, attending to his duties as member of Congress, he was elected its president. The following year, he presented two hundred and fifty dollars to the society, “to be distributed, with other funds, in suitable premiums, at such times and in such manner as the society may judge most advantageous to the cause of domestic industry.” The entire letter accompanying the donation is too valuable to be omitted, and is given at length in another part of this volume, together with the resolutions of the society in regard to the same.†

* See an interesting letter on this subject, in the second part of this volume.

† The Genesee Farmer, vol. x., No. 1, 1849, in closing a highly complimentary article on the history of Colonel Pratt, says: — “In whatever position we view

The agricultural fair that was held at Cairo, Greene county, in the autumn of 1845, will long be remembered as one of the most interesting ever held in the Empire State. It was numerously attended, not only by farmers, but also by the followers of every other branch of industry in that vicinity. The tanners from the mountain towns, in a particular manner, turned out with admirable spirit, and made a noble appearance. A train of more than twenty teams of the largest size, loaded with leather, was escorted into town by the citizens.

At the head of the procession were the fine teams from Colonel Pratt's tannery. They were decorated with hemlock boughs, and from one floated a banner, bearing for a device a hemlock tree, and the legend, "BY THIS WE THRIVE." The weight of the contents of each wagon exceeded four thousand pounds, and the value of the leather amounted to twenty-six thousand dollars. The escort consisted of farmers and others in wagons, and the entire procession was a mile in length. The arrangements of the day were under the direction

the character of Colonel Pratt, whether as a farmer, tanner, legislator or banker, he has been eminently successful, without impeding the progress of others; developing those rare qualities which are so happily united in him, of sound judgment, prompt and efficient action and execution, and far-reaching sagacity, blended with the kindest and most benevolent impulses. * * * We close by mentioning the highly honorable fact, that Colonel Pratt is the first self-taught farmer and mechanic in our state who has received the honorary degree of Master of Arts from one of our highest literary institutions; — an honor richly merited by him, and reflecting credit on the distinguished institution (Union College) by which it was conferred."

of Colonel Pratt, as president of the society; and wherever he appeared, he was received by the great crowd with the most enthusiastic and long-continued cheers.

It had been expected that the address before the society would be delivered by that distinguished scientific agriculturist, John S. Skinner, Esq.; but he was prevented from being present, by circumstances beyond his control. On reading Mr. Skinner's letter to the society, Colonel Pratt remarked that he had been notified that such might prove to be the event; and, as he had ever made it a rule to be prepared for every emergency, he had hastily written an address for the occasion, which, he doubted not, would be received, under the circumstances, with all proper indulgence. It was received with great favor. It was directly to the point, and what was wanted. The reader will find it, at length, in the second part of this volume. Few agricultural addresses have been more warmly received and heartily commended than this one. It exhibits very clearly the author's familiarity with the subject of which he treats, as well as the sound practical views which he entertained. We shall be excused by the reader for anticipating the following striking extract:

“Washington,” said the orator, “was great in war, but greater still in peace. He presided with unsurpassed wisdom and dignity over the affairs of state, but added increased lustre to both by the calm contentment of Mount Vernon. Every farmer cannot expect to

occupy so high a position, or to gain so much applause ; but every one ought, in his own sphere, to practise the same strict integrity, and faithful performance of duty ; and to be, in his own principles and conduct, a Washington, possessing the same virtues, though he may never have the same glorious opportunity to exemplify them. Every mechanic cannot expect to make so useful discoveries as the *steamboat* and *cotton-gin* ; yet every one can and ought to acquaint himself with all the mysteries of his art, and give diligence to make himself as capable, and his work as nearly perfect, as possible, doing all that Fulton or Whitney would have done in his place.”

Another fair was held in 1847, at Windham, and was continued, with great spirit and interest, for two days. The address was delivered by Mr. Johnson, the Secretary of the State Agricultural Society. After the people had assembled, and prayers had been offered, Colonel Pratt, as president of the society, made substantially the following brief address, before introducing the orator :

“ It is gratifying, indeed, to me, to see this numerous gathering. It marks the day. It is certain that the people are truly in earnest. You have come up, like lords of the soil, with cheerful faces and stout hearts ; and, I doubt not, full of gratitude, that you have been permitted to earn your own bread by the labor of your own hands ; that you live in a free country, and help to administer the best of governments ; that you live in a

healthful climate, and are surrounded by good neighbors, good citizens. There is every reason why we should be happy, cheerful and contented, and, above all, thankful for our lot.

“We have chosen this day,” he continued, “as a kind of jubilee, a thanksgiving for the abundance which our land has produced, as well as for life, liberty and happiness; a day of rest from the toils of labor, to unbend the bow of application, to compare notes with our neighbors, and to extend our acquaintance; in truth, to enjoy a freeman’s intellectual feast.”

On the conclusion of the able address of Mr. Johnson, the president arose, with a movement somewhat slower than his accustomed manner, and, with a significant smile, held up to the view of all present a *silver medal*, and said: “Every man possesses some pride. It is well that it is so; for, without pride, we should not have been assembled together to-day. Pride lifts up the man to do his work well,—to do his duty. It starts the neighbor to do still better; and thus we sometimes find a whole town or county moved to excel by the spirit of pride.

“This medal,” he went on to say, “was the first premium awarded by the American Institute for the best hemlock-tanned leather. If I did not tell of it, you would not know it. If it were given to be useful, it must be seen and known. Why should such things be kept out of sight, as misers keep their money? No; the great object of life is to be useful.”

He closed by addressing a few complimentary remarks to the ladies, and words of encouragement to competitors who must necessarily be disappointed in not being successful.

“All cannot expect to receive the first premium,” said he; “some worthy men must fail. All such should console themselves with the hope that their success will come at the next trial, and under even more flattering circumstances.”

During this year, a very handsome compliment was paid to Colonel Pratt, by a highly respectable society in a distant state. On the 7th of January, 1847, on motion of J. D. B. De Bow, Esq., the Honorable Henry Clay, of Kentucky, and Honorable Zadock Pratt, of New York, were unanimously elected honorary members of “the *Agricultural and Mechanic Association of the State of Louisiana.*”*

We have introduced one or two incidents in this chapter somewhat in violation of chronological order; but we have done so that the reader may see with more distinctness what was important in the life of Colonel Pratt, as connected with *agriculture*.

In July, 1844, a very extensive fire occurred in the city of Hudson, occasioning very great loss and suffering. The news spread rapidly through the adjoining towns, and soon reached Prattsville. Colonel Pratt, with his usual promptness, did not stop to inquire what others

* As the letter of Colonel Pratt is characteristic of the man, we have inserted it in the second part of this volume.

had done, or what they intended to do, but forthwith sent a handsome sum to the relief of the sufferers, which was the first money received.

In speaking of this act, the "*Hudson Gazette*" said : "It is in a high degree creditable to the reputation for liberality, public spirit and benevolence, which our worthy member of Congress so universally enjoys. And what adds more to the deed of charity is the fact that it came from an individual who is not a resident among us, but of another county, and the money was the first that was contributed from any source, and the means of affording the first relief to the sufferers by the late calamitous fire."

The efforts made by Colonel Pratt to secure, in his town, a proper respect for the Sabbath and the Bible, are not among the least of his life. In 1845, he furnished a copy of the Bible for every family in the town, not already provided, besides presenting a beautiful copy for the desk in each of the churches, saying, "Give men light and knowledge of the law of God, and you give them wealth and power."

Since the commencement of the great tannery in Prattsville, it has been the invariable rule of its proprietor to have the Sabbath kept sacredly as a day of rest for all his men and teams.

The Episcopalians of the town considering it important that a new house of worship for their use should be erected during the year 1845, it was voted that it should be built in handsome style, of Gothic architect-

ure. To this object Colonel Pratt contributed one-third of the requisite funds ; thus practically illustrating the sincerity of his professions, in not being a sectarian in matters of religious belief.

To desire success in any undertaking, is one thing ; to command it, quite another ; and to be actuated by high motives, or, in other words, *to deserve it*, is still another. These several sources make up the character of a man's ambition. It may be one of selfishness, it may be one of vanity, or it may be one of *pure good will to society*. We do not speak of men who profess to be entirely superior to selfishness, because it is an error to suppose that any such exist. We are willing to admit that some seem to live as if the world were made for them, as man for the "pampered goose," as a miser for his heaps of gold ; or as the wretch who has no mercy, no charity, no sympathy or affection, for aught but kindred ; or for that narrow self which belies its own wants, and mocks at the wants of others. But, in making this admission, we are not precluded from the privilege of declaring our respect for those who emphatically live for society, and whose only selfishness appears to be that of providing for themselves as linked with the common weal. They look to the common lot for a portion of their own happiness. They are willing to help others, that they may satisfy the demands of an enlightened self-respect. They count themselves as one of a family, a circle, a neighborhood, or nation. A good act in one sphere benefits all in the same sphere. What adds to the

real happiness of one family adds to the welfare of a nation.

A simple act of duty is not limited to the immediate results which flow from it, but involves the dissemination of the principles by which it was originated. What is well done, is valuable as an example ; and, to render an example in the highest degree useful, it should be perpetuated as a blessing to posterity.

It is thus within the province of moral genius to multiply the blessings of a single deed, so that its history will prove a perpetual source of solid good.

In the growth of Prattsville, its founder saw the real triumph of principle. He saw in it the results of simple duty. He saw that he was but the agent, and not the author of success. He saw in it a truthful lesson to be taught to an inquiring world. But in himself the principle was embodied and illustrated, and the history of himself became a lesson for the instruction of others. In addition to these reflections of simple duty as connected with the events of life, he felt that he could read the language of kindness in every tree, brook and rock, that surrounded him. They had seemed to make up a portion of that smile with which he had been so often cheered by his Maker. He realized a delightful sympathy which was common both to men and things, and his affections were enlarged by the numerous associations of place. The rocks and the mountains only needed the aid of the artist to establish an enduring identity.

With sentiments like these, he sought an artist of

skill and reputation, who should be able to reduce the granite quarries into form and language ; that, when he should be no more, and when no one should live to speak of his attachments to the place, the place itself should speak of him. It was a sculptor's task ; and whoever shall visit Prattsville during the coming generations, will first ask to read the sculptor's story.

We are happy in being able to translate the reader to the scene we are describing, by employing the language of another, whose poetical conceptions do ample justice to this interesting portion of our subject. It is a graphic description of the town of Prattsville, and embraces those peculiar features to which we have just alluded.

“To the lovers of the picturesque and beautiful in scenery, few parts of our country offer stronger inducements for a visit than the vicinity of the Catskill range, on the west bank of the Hudson. The lofty hills and mountain peaks, snow-clad, and presenting every variety of form and appearance,—now towering up on high with sublime grandeur, now gradually sinking to the level of some retired quiet valley,—excite emotions of pleasure in every breast ; and one is often obliged to pause and look with admiration upon scenes of so much beauty and attractiveness. The road, which passes through this region westward, winds its way from the level of the Hudson, gradually higher and higher, till the mountain range is crossed ; and all along in the many valleys, on the banks of the water-courses, smiling villages have sprung up, and the hum of industry and honest toil gives

forth the pleasant sounds of prosperity and peace. Happy is the country which, like ours, enables its people to live and labor in peace, without fear of the oppressor, and in the enjoyment of liberty in its fullest, noblest extent!

“Probably no portion of Greene county, New York, is more lovely than the elevated valley in which the beautiful village of Prattsville is situated; embosomed amid the hills, nearly three thousand feet above the level of the Hudson, and abundantly supplied with water, fertile and fair to the eye, it presents a picture on which one may well love to gaze; and when we reflect upon its history, and remember how its very existence and its prosperity are owing to the talent and skill, no less than honorable, high-minded principles, of the man whose name it bears, we cannot but look at it with deeper interest than ordinary, or forbear to spend a little time in examining into its unique origin and character.

“Twenty-five years ago, everything in this valley was in a state of nature. The hill-sides were covered with vast forests of hemlock; a single farm-house was situated near the bank of the creek; and save the few fields of cleared land by the water’s bank, and the murmuring of the babbling mountain brooks, there was nought to break the monotonous stillness of the uninhabited but lovely valley;—but now, how changed the scene, how vast the contrast! Energy and activity have produced mutations greater than those wrought by the magician’s wand. The forests and fields have given place to the dwelling of the merchant and the house of

the mechanic ; to the tannery and factory, the store and printing-office, the hotel and the bank, the churches and academy, and, in fine, to everything which marks the prosperous and happy village of three thousand inhabitants. A broad and beautiful avenue passes through its midst, lined with trees, planted by Colonel Pratt's own hands, in years gone by ; and neat and tasteful residences, indicative of the homes of those who love to enjoy the fruit of honest gain, stand side by side, at convenient intervals, and surrounded by their beautiful gardens of fruit and flowers. The noise and bustling confusion of the city are not there, it is true ; but there is no lack of activity and life in its streets. The farmer comes to it to buy and sell ; the traveller stops here to rest and enjoy the scenery of this lovely region ; the mail-stage, daily, each way, passes through with its passengers, bringing and carrying away the post ; the factory-bells ring, and the operatives go forth and then again return to their work ; the academy has its busy little folks, whose noisy plays enliven the scene ; and when Sunday comes, the quiet, orderly, religious population frequent their houses of worship, with gravity and devout attention. The ever-flowing stream of water which irrigates this valley, and supplies so abundant water-power, adds to the charm of the village ; and the lofty hills on either side, with the mountain-tops towering up in the distance, furnish a never-failing source of enjoyment to those who love to look upon nature's noblest works. No wonder, then, that Prattsville, being situated on the turnpike

road, midway between Catskill and Delhi, should be the centre of the contemplated new county, which will ere long be formed to meet the wants and wishes of the people. Marvellous is the change which a quarter of a century has produced in this beautiful valley ; still more marvellous is it, that it is almost all owing to the sagacity, energy, industry and steadfast uprightness of one who has grown with the village which bears his name, and is entitled to honor such as perhaps no other man in our midst can claim. Honor, then, to whom honor is due.

“ There is one feature in connection with Prattsville which is truly unique, and deserves to be dwelt upon with some care and particularity ; and that is, the sculptured rocks, on a lofty eminence just at the eastern section of the village. As the traveller enters the valley and nears the village, he is struck with beholding on his right hand, some three hundred feet or more above the level of the road, a colossal bust of Colonel Pratt, and other sculptures, well meriting attention as historic records. He is impelled by the novelty of the occurrence, in such a place, to make an early visit to this locality ; so, passing by the many other attractive spots in the vicinity, he retraces his steps from the hotel, and seeks the place which he has just passed. He finds the hill-side steep, and rather toilsome to ascend ; but a meandering walk leads him gradually upward till he reaches the base of the overhanging, nearly perpendicular argillaceous rock on which the sculpture is carved. As he approaches, the objects stand out more and more

distinctly. The artist has cut the bust in profile, about twenty feet above the base of the rocks, and a shelving canopy both protects it from the trickling water from above and also adds to its general effect. Underneath, in deep-cut letters, is the inscription, 'ZADOCK PRATT, BORN OCT. 30TH, 1790.' Near to this, but not quite so high up, is a massive scroll, pointing out an illustrious act of Colonel Pratt's public life; it is a scroll neatly cut, partly unrolled, containing the words, 'BUREAU OF STATISTICS, 1844.' A sinewy, vigorous arm, grasping a hammer and a beam-knife, used by tanners in their work, form neat appendages underneath and at the side of this remarkable sculpture. A little to the side of this last sculpture, the artist has carved upon the rocks a representation — very well done, by the way — of the Prattsville tannery, which is the largest in the world; and he has put on record the noteworthy fact that Colonel Pratt, within twenty years, has tanned here, with hemlock bark, one million sides of sole leather. One other tablet, containing the names of Colonel Pratt's son and daughter, completes these interesting sculptures."

Colonel Pratt has more than once been heard to say, that when his earthly life shall have terminated, it is his desire that his mortal remains should be placed in a tomb cut in these rocks, beneath the artistic designs and inscriptions just described.

This reminds us of the poetical wish of Sir William Temple, whose favorite retreat was his beautiful garden;

and who desired that his heart should be placed in a silver box, and buried underneath the sun-dial which was elevated in the midst of flowers.

It was not without a delicate perception of this peculiar feature in human nature that a modern author says :

“There is in the heart of man a native sense of beauty, a latent sympathy, a harmony with all that is lovely on the earth, which makes him unconsciously seek out spots of peculiar sweetness, not only for his daily dwelling, but also for both his temporary resting-place and for the mansion of his long repose.”

In July, 1845, Colonel Pratt was elected an honorary member of the Franklin Institute of Pennsylvania, for the promotion of the mechanic arts, as a testimony of respect and esteem entertained for him as a practical thinker and mechanic. About the same time, he was elected an honorary member of several literary institutions, in New Jersey and elsewhere. The following year, he received a similar honor from the Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Connecticut. He was also elected corresponding member of the “*American Agricultural Association.*”

The occasion of receiving a silver medal from the American Institute, New York, led to a request, on the part of that association, that he would give them a full account of his works at Prattsville. His reply was full of information upon the subject of tanning, and the reader will be well compensated for an attentive perusal

of it. It is really a practical treatise on tanning, and makes a portion of the second part of this volume.

This letter, coming as it does from the only source that could furnish a full account of the business described, gives us some adequate idea of the remarkable change which has been effected, so far as tanning is concerned, in what is now one of the richest districts in the State of New York, but which was scarcely known twenty-three years ago, except as offering, by the denseness and wildness of its forests, superior encouragements for the hunter.

This letter will be found useful to men of all classes. To the historian of the country, as one of the many documents that must be consulted when he shall write the history of American industry; to the statist, as an example of method; to the man of business, as embodying many useful facts in the progress of a singularly successful career; and to the general reader, whose sole object is the acquisition of knowledge, because it forms a chapter in the volume of our country's labors in the field of enterprise.

In order to give a more complete idea of Prattsville, and the change wrought in the vicinity, than can be obtained from this letter alone, the following facts and statistics are introduced, as they are found in a short speech made by Colonel Pratt, at the Agricultural Fair, Windham, N. Y., 1850. Speaking of Prattsville and the vicinity, he said:

“When I first came among you, nearly fifty years

ago, through dark hemlocks and bad roads, and when but few inhabitants were on the way, my parents settled in Windham, now called Lexington. They taught me to go to the only meeting-house in town, nearly three miles, every Sabbath, on foot. It was before I had yet tanned enough leather to wear. This helped me to establish a good physical constitution, and kept me out of mischief on the Sabbath.

* * * * *

“There were then about one thousand five hundred inhabitants in one town, — since divided into six towns, and numbering about ten thousand of the most hardy, honest independent inhabitants on the globe.

“I see here some of those early pioneers, who had to ‘back grain’ twenty miles to a grist-mill, after having worked at low wages to earn it. Some made maple-sugar, and carried it from fifteen to thirty miles, to exchange it for corn, pork, and potatoes. They could not buy on credit, so poor was old Windham.

“For one rough meeting-house, then, with slabs for seats, and other fixtures to correspond, we now number twenty, with all the modern refinements, showing that we carry pride into our churches. And from the then despised hemlock forest have arisen beautiful towns, splendid villages, and princely farmers, who have reared cheerful households.

“And now I will show you the degree of advantage that these dreary hemlocks have been to the farmers of the mountain towns, since I have been engaged in tan-

ning. It has been my lot to employ over 15,000 years of labor, over 30,000 men. I have paid them over \$2,500,000; have caused to be cleared over 10,000 acres of land; have used over 200,000 cords of hemlock bark,— have paid over half a million of dollars for it; have used or worn out some 500 horses, 1000 oxen; have used up 200,000 bushels of oats, 120,000 tons of hay, 30,000 barrels of beef and pork, nearly 100,000 barrels of flour, and potatoes without number or measure. I have tanned 1,250,000 sides of leather. I have built a hundred houses. My daily disbursements are over \$5000. I have employed capital, in my business here, over \$10,000,000. Every man that would work received his money, and in peace; and, to the credit of the community be it said, I never had a side of leather stolen, during my residence here, and never was a defendant in a lawsuit arising out of business transactions.

“In Prattsville there are three tanneries, tanning annually one hundred and thirty thousand sides of sole-leather; employing two hundred hands and half a million of capital; three machine-shops and three furnaces; two woollen factories, one cotton factory, one oil-cloth factory, three grist-mills, three hotels, twelve stores, two wheelwright shops, two cabinet-ware manufactories, three carpenter’s shops, two harness shops, four tailor’s shops, one printing-office, one goldsmith’s shop, one mitten and one match factory. There are one bank, three churches, one academy, and five schools. There are four doctors and two lawyers.”

From these statistics, we find, in the growth and prosperity of Prattsville, one of the most surprising proofs of American enterprise, so much a subject of wonder and admiration to the civilized world.

Whoever in the United States aims at founding a town or city, must show to the world that there are interests to be promoted by its being built. No place in this country has ever risen to consequence which has not had solid claims to public respect.

Compare, for example, Cincinnati with Washington, if the worthlessness of factitious elements is desired to be seen in promoting the growth of a town, and the usefulness of real elements is to be demonstrated. When, half a century ago, the seat of the government of the United States was removed to Washington, that place was of far more consequence than Cincinnati. Look at the two cities *now*! Cincinnati is one of the largest places in the Union, and is constantly and rapidly increasing; Washington remains what the satirical Virginian long ago called it, "the city of magnificent distances." The reason is obvious. Cincinnati is the centre of a great and flourishing region, a commercial capital; while Washington is nothing but the seat of government of a nation which abhors centralization, and which cannot, therefore, aid in elevating its nominal capital without doing violence to its leading principles.

The United States present many a town, and city even, which has grown up, as it were, by magic, under the controlling power of immense wealth. Lowell, Man-

chester and Lawrence, are instances of this kind. These are the results of associated wealth and enterprise. It cannot be said that they are made up of the happy homes which come from individual labor and the social intercourse of a rural town. They are, rather, the cities of workshops and operatives, — the temporary business dwellings of foreigners and others, whose chief interests are centred in the corporations which employ them, and in the wages which they are to receive.

But there are very few, if any towns, which, like Prattsville, owe their existence and their growth almost entirely to the influence of one man, who, without wealth, and with means scarcely adequate to begin his work, made his own survey of the country, selected his site, removed to the woods to found his town, and insured to it a growth and prosperity hardly equalled by any inland town in the state. This was accomplished, too, in a new country, where every movement was opposed by inconvenience and obstacle.

It is a noble testimony to the value of those institutions which permit such encouragements, and offer such facilities to the young men of our nation to achieve true greatness. And it is far from being the least pleasing feature in the history of Colonel Pratt, that his energy has been as untiring and vigorous in the pursuit of high, virtuous action, in all his public and private relations of life, as it has been in his pursuit of success in business. Of all the high compliments and praises that have been so lavishly bestowed upon him, he valued those most

highly which have been paid him by men distinguished for the virtue of their lives.

Colonel Pratt, though making no pretensions to literary merit, having studied his classics in the school of nature and amid the hurry of business, yet, being an attentive observer of both men and things, had become so practically educated, that his counsels were sought as of peculiar value. And, if his thoughts and expressions were sometimes rough from the quarry, they were granite still; and, brought together, they made a noble structure. Though the artist's hammer had but slightly touched its surface, it was, nevertheless, invaluable for the stores of thought with which it was furnished.

His connection with various agricultural and mechanic societies had rendered him not only distinguished as the patron of the arts and sciences, but as an able lecturer on various subjects.

In 1847, September 23, he was invited by the trustees of Spencertown Academy to deliver the address at the dedication of a new and beautiful building erected for the purposes of education. The address was full of good sense, and high and just views of the true objects and aims of education, and the best means of securing them. It was received with very high terms of commendation, and was afterwards, by request, published for circulation. It is embraced in this volume. Soon after this occasion, he made a valuable donation of books to the library of the academy.

Of the many addresses delivered by Colonel Pratt, few have been spoken of in more unqualified terms of approbation than the one delivered by him before the Franklin Library Association, in the city of Hudson, January 4, 1848, on the *aphorism*, “Mind your business.”* In speaking of this address, the “Mechanic’s Advocate” says :

“Nothing short of reading the whole address can do anything like justice to this noble production. Every line contains a truth, and every paragraph an indisputable fact. It should be read and re-read by every working man in the state, and repeated at every fireside in the country.”

The “Columbia Republican” says of it :

“The lecture deserves and has received the warmest commendation ; and if we are rather sparing of laudatory remarks, it is because we fear an adequate expression of our opinion might have the appearance of an extravagant encomium. Every sentence in the lecture is full of meaning. It is impossible to do it anything like justice within the limits of an ordinary newspaper notice.”

We might add many such notices, and equally favorable, but they would be out of place here ; and we have given the above as expressing the spirit and favor of the press in respect to a plain man, whose chief recommendation is *plain common sense*.

* See Second Part.

Having long entertained a desire for more extensive travel in the different parts of the Union, Colonel Pratt, in company with his son, George W. Pratt, then a young man of eighteen, made a tour through the Southern and South-western States. Though he had had occasion before to acquire, in his connection with political life, a correct statistical view of the different portions of the Union, he could not, from paper or written reports, form an adequate idea of the numerous resources of the country. This required personal observation. He fully realized, also, the disadvantages under which all young men travel upon the continent of Europe, who have not first obtained a thorough knowledge of their own country. It was with a view to remove these disadvantages, and fit him for such travel in Europe, that his son accompanied him at this time.

Since that period, his son has twice made the tour of Europe — once in 1848, and again in 1850, in company with his sister.* In the first tour, of the many countries which he visited, we may mention Egypt and the Holy Land. He was in Rome at the time of the revolution, and when the city was surrounded by the troops of the French republic.

The son evidently belongs to the same practical school with his father. He cared but little for the

* They visited England, Scotland, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Turkey, Russia, Hungary, Greece, &c. &c.

honors of a college, though he has been a close student in his own choice and well-selected library. He reads with facility several languages, and is thoroughly conversant with history and the sciences.* He was early impressed, however, with the great importance of traveling. His inclinations were for commercial pursuits, but he desired to see the world before he commenced his labors as a business man. In this view he was sustained by his father.

His father heard his reasons for pursuing the course which his preference had marked out for himself, and was much pleased at the choice he had made. "I admitted, at once," said he, "that it was a sensible conclusion. I told him to go, submitting himself with confidence to an all-wise and overruling Providence. To start with some object, and to gather knowledge on the way. To make daily entries of what he saw, heard and did. To neglect nothing. To begin nothing that he did not finish. To review each day by itself; embrace the good and leave the bad; read his Bible; do his duty, and be careful of his health. To remember that knowledge was power, and that he should always esteem it a great privilege to converse with learned and accomplished men. There is a man to every station in the world, and much may be gained by finding him; for whatever one learned in conversation would be more likely to be remembered than any information gathered

* While abroad, a German university bestowed upon him an honorary degree of high distinction, in consideration of his literary attainments.

from books. To spend what was necessary for his objects; and as to what was unnecessary, he must be his own judge. I felt confident that he would commit no intentional errors; but, if he had doubts, at any time, as to what was right or prudent, to ask the advice of men of age and experience, who would have no motive to deceive him."

With a brief chapter of such advice, the son made the tours to which we have already alluded. To say that the counsels of the father were sacredly followed, or that the son was entirely satisfied with the results of his travels, would be an act of supererogation. They both belong to a class of men who seem to have an intuitive knowledge of what ought to be done, what can be done, what should be done, and what *cannot* be done. What they think, they do; and this may be denominated *the common sense* of life.

During his absence, the son wrote many letters home to his father, some of which have been published. They were not intended for publication; but they discover a spirit of inquiry, and a vein of practical remark, which would enable the reader to distinguish the writer from most of foreign correspondents, who write so much and say so little.

We have alluded to the children of Colonel Pratt with no little hesitation, for the reason that they are retiring in their habits and tastes, and avoid, when consistent with duty, all that tends to public notoriety.

But we feel justified in what we have said, as doing

no violence to good taste, in view of the public position of their respected father, who has just reason to be proud of his offspring, and whose course of parental judgment and confidence is worthy to be recorded upon tablets of gold, for the benefit of posterity. What is said and done by a practical man will prove of value to the young of every community, of every generation. His deeds and counsels stand like way-guides along the devious paths of life, to direct, to aid and encourage. They reveal, as it were, the foot-prints of a very dear friend, who has passed on before in the rough ways of the world, indicating the track of safety to all who may come after him.

On the 7th of March, 1848, Colonel Pratt was elected an honorary member of the *New York Historical Society*. In July of the same year, he received from "Union College" the honorary degree of Master of Arts, — the first instance in the state of this degree being conferred upon a "self-taught man."*

It was a high honor, and one of which he had much

* This is one of the many compliments which literary men have extended to Colonel Pratt. Several works of merit have been dedicated to him, and by authors who have recited his many acts of beneficence as worthy of a permanent record. We may mention a handsomely embellished volume, published in New York, 1850, entitled, "THE EAST: SKETCHES OF TRAVEL IN EGYPT AND THE HOLY LAND. BY THE REV. J. A. SPENCER, M. A." In another work, Colonel Pratt is designated in the dedication as "*the friend of the mechanic, and the patron of all that is useful.*" It is entitled, "THE AMERICAN BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BOOK," by William Hunt, published in 1848. Also, a work on "AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY;" and still another, giving an account of the "WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO," &c.

reason to be proud. He spoke of it with freedom, and did not disguise his high appreciation of the distinction which it conferred. He did not claim to be a proficient in the classics, or the sciences ; but he yielded precedence to no one in a just estimate of their great importance to the progress of mind and of humanity.

On the approach of winter, in 1848, his son being in Europe, and his daughter at school in New York, Colonel Pratt decided to remove to the city to spend the cold season.

On one occasion, when visiting the tanneries, he met one of the deacons of the place. With a view to gain information, he directed the conversation into those channels which he knew would be most interesting to the deacon, by inquiring in regard to society matters — “Whether they paid their minister promptly,” &c. The deacon answered that he was sorry to say that they were somewhat behind ; they found it difficult to collect the dues ; some were negligent about paying, and he was afraid that the minister was sometimes disappointed.

The colonel immediately handed him a sum nearly equal to one-half of the amount outstanding, saying, “Here, take this, and see that you are not in debt when I come again.” It was a principle with him, at all times, to give superior prominence to the cause of religion, and to do what he could to enforce the greatest promptitude in society matters.

Early in 1849, he was elected president of the Mechanic’s Institute in New York city ; and, on the 16th

of January, he was duly installed in his office. On this occasion, he delivered his inaugural address before the institute, which was received with great enthusiasm by a large and highly intelligent audience. At its close, the society voted to print a thousand copies extra for distribution, and to prefix to the same a portrait of the author.

The estimate placed upon this address will best appear by a perusal of opinions expressed by the papers at the time it was delivered. It is sufficient to say that it more than sustained the high reputation he had already acquired, as a sound thinker, and a safe adviser. There was a cheering influence in his tones, a peculiar freshness in his views, and an earnest sincerity in his manner, which seemed to carry the audience from feeling to sentiment, and from sentiment to conviction, with a power that was truly irresistible. All were pleased, and all felt that they had been instructed. The tanner of Prattsville had become the favorite lecturer of the Empire City.*

Colonel Pratt's reputation as a lecturer soon gave him fame beyond the limits of his own state, and in 1850 he received from the Maryland Institute an invitation to lecture before that body; but circumstances did not admit of his accepting the invitation.

* He presided over the doings of the "Institute" with great ability and usefulness for two years, and then resigned. While he was president, he made the society several liberal donations, and evinced a deep interest in the objects of the association. He was unanimously nominated for reelection the third time; but he declined the honor, as will be seen by the characteristic letter in the SECOND PART.

In 1850, he was appointed, by Governor Fish, one of the committee to make arrangements in reference to the "World's Fair," to be holden in London, in 1851. He was also appointed delegate, by the New York Mechanics' Institute, to attend the exhibition; but these honors he declined.

He became an important contributor to the "World's Fair," and the character of the contribution, as well as that of the man, may be inferred from the interesting account with which he accompanied the specimens of leather sent out. It is brief, and worthy to be preserved on record, as an example of his method.*

The temperance society of Prattsville hold their anniversary meeting on New-year's Day. At their meeting in 1849, Colonel Pratt was invited to preside. On taking the chair, he made a brief address, which we give in another part of this volume, and which is marked with peculiar originality.

We have had frequent occasion to speak of Colonel Pratt's liberality. We might enumerate a thousand little events connected with his generosity; but such a course is not necessary to make up the general outline which we have attempted. It is due to our subject, however, that we should record an act which does much honor to him as a politician. During the election for county and other officers, in 1850, the contest for the office of sheriff ran very high, in Greene county, between

* See Part Second.

the whigs and democrats. Colonel Pratt spared no pains to secure the election of the democratic candidate. The whigs were successful ; but their candidate being a poor man, he could find no one willing to be his bondsman in the sum of ten thousand dollars, required by law. The fact was communicated to Colonel Pratt, when absent some hundred and fifty miles from home. Having been acquainted with the successful candidate, and believing him to be an honest man, he returned home immediately, and offered to become his bondsman in the required sum.

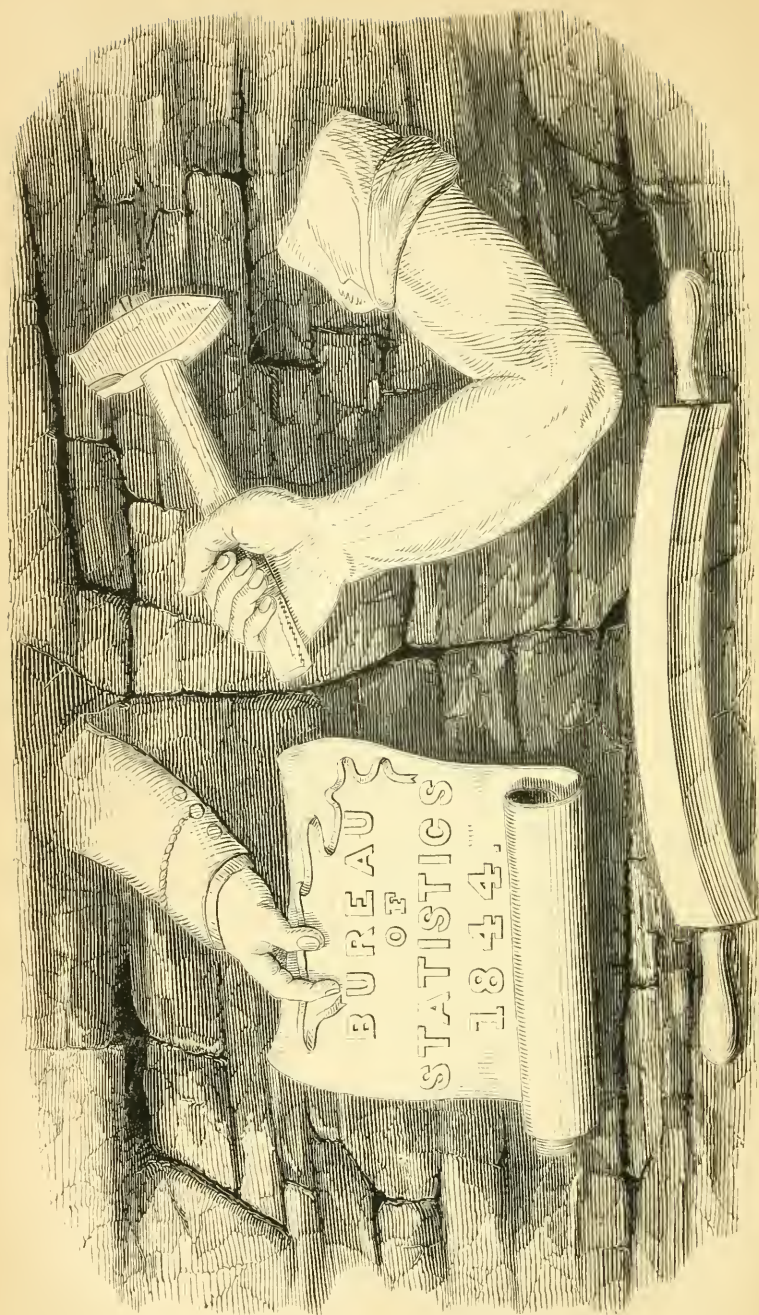
On signing the bond, he playfully remarked, "Sheriff, I always had a good opinion of you, though I travelled, before the election, one hundred and fifty miles to vote against you ; but since you are elected, and need help, I have come one hundred and fifty miles to become bail for you. The will of the people must be obeyed. The whigs sometimes master, and in that case let them do their best. The democrats will soon have their turn."

Such an example is worthy of particular commemoration. It is doubtful whether its parallel can be produced. It affords, indeed, a pleasing relief from that want of confidence and good feeling which so often characterizes disappointed partisans.

During the year 1850, Colonel Pratt received from the stone-cutters of the city of Washington a tender of a stone, or block of marble, as he might elect, to be wrought by their own hands, with such device as might meet with his acceptance, to make a part of the National

Washington Monument, as a testimony of their respect and gratitude for the essential service which he did the mechanics of the District, by his efforts in their behalf in Congress and elsewhere.

The letter accompanying the resolutions of the stone-cutters, and offering the block, together with the reply, are so creditable to both parties, that we insert them in the SECOND PART, as giving the fullest explanation of the circumstances attending this extraordinary manifestation of respect and good feeling.



View on the Rocks in Prattsville, N. Y.

CHAPTER VIII.

Political parties of the United States. — The two great ones. — The past and the future. — Colonel Pratt a democrat. — Review of the democratic party. — Enters public life. — Elected to Congress. — Appointed one of the presidential electors. — Influence of wealth. — Political condition of the times. — Commercial revulsion. — Extra session of Congress called by President Van Buren.

THE two parties which, from the dawn of history, have had an existence in all countries enjoying any title to freedom, have their places in the United States. These parties are known by various names in the histories of free nations; but they have ever been, and are now, substantially the same in character. The one is *the party of the past*, which, however much it may, at times, and for the accomplishment of specific purposes, affect to sympathize with the present, is ever looking to the past for something to be imitated. The present it regards as a period of degeneracy, and it fears the future. Notwithstanding that the theory of this party is contradicted by the entire experience of mankind, and in the face of the fact that its principles have never been applied to affairs without producing discontent among individuals, and the destruction of nations, it still continues to have many votaries, not only among the ignorant and unreflecting, but also among good men, of the honesty of whose opinions we can have no doubt, whatever we may think of their wisdom.

The romance that we connect with the past; the belief that, in some vague and indefinite portion of it, there existed a golden age, in contradistinction to that age of iron in which we are all too apt to think our lot is cast; the certainty that it is beyond the reach of change and time; the contrast which its quiet affords to the war and battle of life; the disposition that is so common to magnify the evil that is, and the good that is no more;—all these, and many other things which might be enumerated, tend to give to the past a degree of consideration, especially in minds of a peculiar cast, to which it has no title whatever, when examined in the spirit of enlightened criticism. Then, too, the distance from which we view it tends to make that appear an harmonious whole, which is full of imperfections, and marked with indisputable evidences of human infirmity and suffering. As, when we examine a picture from a certain distance, we see no drawbacks to its apparent excellence, which becomes strikingly defective on a closer examination, so it is with the ages that are gone. Viewed from afar, they strike the imagination, and dazzle the mind; approached and scrutinized, they are seen to be but the fancies of tradition, or the uncouth realities of barbarism.

The other party is the *party of the future*. It accepts what is good from the past, but it confides in the present, and still more in the future. Constant improvement is its great object, and it anticipates, rather than looks back to, an age of gold. It has a lively faith, not

only in the goodness of man, but also in his capacity for indefinite progress. It favors change, because change is the process of improvement. It favors invention, because the greater the command of men over the material agencies of the world, the more likely are they to boldly maintain their rights: as the soldier whose armor was inlaid with gold, and moreover was the reward of valor, fought with greater bravery than his comrades. It encourages those studies and inquiries, those restless energies, which lead to the development of

“—— The mighty secrets hid
In time and nature;”

for by such is the human mind elevated, human power exalted and extended, and human thought made free to take the form of action. It is essentially the party of hope. It may be occasionally baffled, but never subdued. It is the party of righteous revolutions, and of practicable reforms. It is the party whose name is identified with every great conflict that has been waged in behalf of freedom and civilization; and to which, under God, the world is indebted for all it has that causes the race of man to differ from that of brutes.

The adherents of these two parties are often determined by circumstances of education, and by things over which they have no control, though sometimes they deliberately select their positions. As a general thing, it may be said, that all who have their fortunes made, whether by inheritance or self-exertion, belong to the

party of the past ; and all who have their fortunes or themselves to make, belong to the party of the present. There are exceptions to this remark. Here, as in other countries, men of patrician birth are sometimes leaders of the liberal party ; and examples are not wanting of an opposite character, where men of humble origin, and without patronage, play a subservient part to rank and wealth as conservative partisans. Men of books, of theory, are apt to favor the party of the past ; while men of action are more inclined to join the party of progress. It is true that we cannot regard this rule as absolute, for some, indeed, consider it an exception, rather than a rule ; and the two great leaders of the antagonist parties in this country are often adduced, to sustain this position. That such is not a correct view, will appear from a slight examination.

Mr. Jefferson, it is admitted, was a man of large acquaintance with books ; but it is quite as certain that he had been as conversant with men and affairs, at the time he assumed the leadership of the liberal party of the United States, as any statesman of that age. The absurdity of speaking of him as a mere reader of books will appear obvious, when we review his extensive experience. He had been a member of the Virginia Legislature, a member of the Continental Congress, Governor of Virginia, Minister to France, and Secretary of State. On the other hand, General Hamilton, though he had passed his life mainly in active pursuits, was also a man of extensive acquirements. His naturally

arbitrary temper had been made dictatorial by the military life which he had led, and at a time when the mind is most susceptible to strong impressions, which color all after existence. Hamilton judged of men by the experience which he had had in camp and law courts,—certainly not the most favorable places in which to arrive at correct conclusions as to the nature of men and governments. Jefferson's view had been more enlarged; and he had not only seen men at home under a greater variety of circumstances than had Hamilton, but he had visited other countries, and associated with scholars and philosophers. Hamilton, though a great statesman, was only a statesman, and belonged to that school of public men of which the younger Pitt was the chief. Jefferson was not only a statesman, and Hamilton's equal in talents, but also a philosopher. Hamilton relied upon theories,—Jefferson, upon observation. The former was governed by opinions,—the latter, by facts. Hamilton distrusted men, and therefore found them bad on occasion. Jefferson confided in them, and therefore found them trustworthy under circumstances which confirmed the correctness of his judgment. Both were great men, and meant well for their country and for mankind. Each did much for his country, and each left the evidence of his peculiar views of national polity; and the two great parties are representatives of those ideas of which they were the chief types and the early champions.

In the United States, the parties representing those

into which the civilized world is divided are known as the *Democratic party* and the *Whig party*. These parties have had various designations, and to trace their origin and changes would form an instructive lesson in history; but the introduction of such a chapter here would be foreign to the design of the present work.

From what has been said of the character of the two parties, it is easy to see to which of them a man like COLONEL PRATT would attach himself.

He was a democrat by choice, by feeling, and by circumstances. His father, an old Revolutionary soldier, had suffered much at the hands of the English; and, in our subject's boyhood and youth, England, under the pretence of upholding religion and law, was everywhere contending against the spread of democratic ideas, and was the champion of despotism. The son of such a father was not likely to become attached to principles favored by the old enemy of his country, or to look with confidence to the federal party, which showed a bigoted attachment to England, and a servile readiness to defend even her unwarrantable invasions of American rights. As he advanced to manhood, his reason approved his early impulses and preferences. He saw that, under democratic ascendancy, the country had prospered; that its dominion had been extended, its resources developed, and the rights of the states and of individuals strictly maintained. He also saw that the democratic party was ever ready to uphold the country's honor; and this was no ordinary consideration in its favor in the view of one

who was under the dominion of no common sentiment of patriotism. The contest of 1812, and the conduct of the federal party during the troubles of the country, all tended to make him a democrat of the strictest school, both from sentiment and conviction. His intellect, his time, and his means, have been freely bestowed for the advancement of that cause, in the success of which he has felt the greatest interest, from the period of his earliest recollections. His democracy has been without change or shadow of turning for more than forty years. It is not a subject of wonder that a man thus firm, consistent and liberal, should be among those whom the democratic party of New York has always delighted to honor ; or that he should have filled the high stations to which he has been elevated by that party in a manner that has fully justified their choice, and given to himself a national reputation.

Colonel Pratt has filled several local offices, at different periods of his life ; but it was not until the year 1836 that he was placed in nomination for a high political station. He had avoided such demands upon his time until his position in the business world had been completely established, though he had always discharged the political duties of a private citizen with scrupulous fidelity. In the year 1836, he was nominated as a candidate on the democratic ticket of presidential electors, representing the eighth district. That ticket prevailed, at the election in November, by a large majority, and COLONEL PRATT gave his vote for Martin Van Buren and Richard

M. Johnson, as President and Vice-president of the United States.

A much higher honor was conferred upon him at the same election. He was elected to a seat in the Congress of the United States. This was the spontaneous offering of his fellow-citizens, and had been altogether unsought by Colonel Pratt, who well knew that the place was not, in itself, to be coveted by any person impressed with a conscientious sense of the duties belonging to it. He did not feel at liberty to decline serving his fellow-citizens in any capacity to which they might call him. He was nominated because of his personal popularity, and the belief that his name would secure the success of the party. The eighth congressional district was then composed of the counties of Greene, Schoharie, and Columbia, and the majority by which he was chosen was but little short of three thousand, being the largest that was ever given in the district. In Prattsville the vote was almost unanimous in his favor.

This vote is sufficient to show the absurdity and incorrectness of the statements of foreign writers, who have frequently asserted that men of wealth are unpopular here, and stand but little chance at an election, if their antagonists happen to be poor men, even of inferior talents. In this respect it is much here as in all other countries. That wealth has great influence under all circumstances, but few will presume to deny. To say that it is sufficient always, where talent is wanting, or that it is absolutely prejudicial to the candidate, upon the principle that his

opponent is comparatively poor, would, in our opinion, be wholly erroneous. The possession of wealth is a great advantage to the politician here, as it is in all other countries, provided he be a man of sense, and do not assume that wealth must be a substitute for merit. He must be one of the people, if he would occupy those stations which are within the gift of the people. There is no country in the world where property is more secure than it is in America ; and it is not very probable that such would be the case, if the chief holders of the property were objects of dislike.

Colonel Pratt entered on public life at a very critical period of our history. The whig party had been so disheartened, by their complete defeat in the great contest which grew out of the veto by General Jackson of the bill creating a third bank of the United States, that they could not rally their forces in support of any one candidate for the presidency, in 1836 ; and it seemed as if that party were destined to follow its predecessor, the federal party, which disappeared very soon after the conclusion of the war with England. The democratic party appeared to be firmly established in power, and beyond the reach of assault. But, beneath this fair outside, there was much to cause a discerning man, like Colonel Pratt, to prepare himself for a political storm. He was possessed of too intimate a knowledge of the business of the country, and had been personally engaged in too many great transactions, all of a legitimate character, not to be aware that the speculations that had been

so common for the two preceding years must have their appropriate termination in revulsion. The event justified his expectations. Six months after he had been chosen a member of Congress, the commercial crash came, and the country was thrown into one of those pecuniary convulsions which are the natural consequences of errors in commerce and finance. The banking institutions of the country suspended payment, practically declaring themselves insolvent. That which was the inevitable result of a certain course in which individuals had voluntarily engaged, in the hope of speedily acquiring wealth, was attributed to the action of the national government. The reader of the opposition journals of that day, and of the speeches of leading whigs, might be pardoned for supposing that our polity was of that character usually denominated *paternal*,—one of those governments which hold it to be their duty to intermeddle with all the affairs of their subjects, from the highest to the lowest,—and that it had failed to discharge to the utmost of its power the inquisitorial duties that it had sworn to fulfil. Instead of being regarded, as its founders intended it should be, as the mere agency for the better performance of several objects necessary for the welfare of the states and the people, it was treated as if it were one of those magnificent specimens of centralization, which are so common in Europe, and under which the liberties of the people there can never effectually be secured. The government was placed in opposition to the people by

the whigs, whose movements once more assumed a decided character, as they saw a chance of the administration's passing into their hands at the next general election. At that time, those movements were commenced which ended in the nomination of General Harrison, and the victory of the opposition in 1840.*

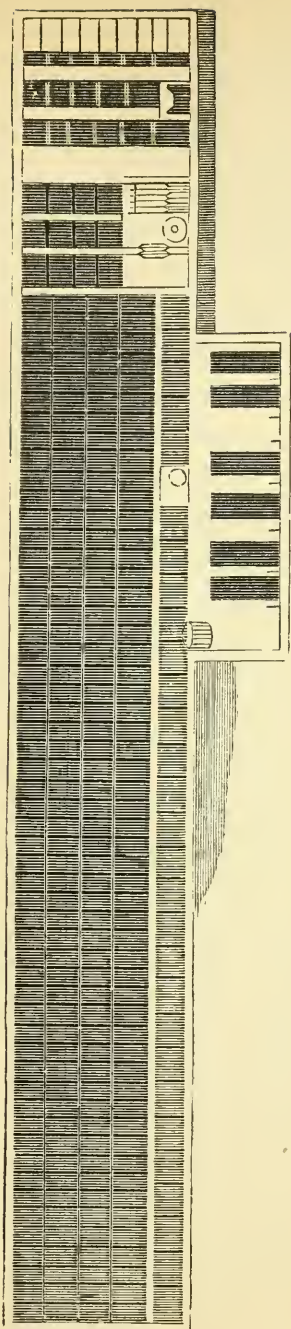
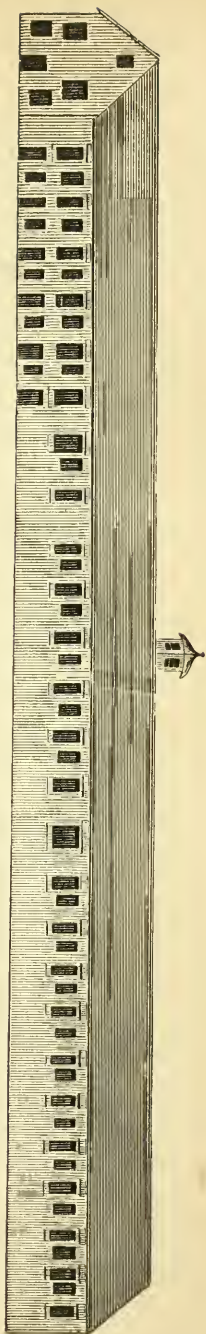
In consequence of the peculiar state of the country, President Van Buren issued his proclamation, calling an extra session of Congress to meet early in September, 1837, at which time it convened.

* So serious was the state of things, that, in the moral and orderly city of Boston, possible resistance was threatened to the laws of the land. The idea of a "higher law" than that which the authorities are bound to support, and which all good citizens will always aid them in supporting, is by no means of recent origin. The history of the aristocratical party in the United States shows that the "higher law" has always found favor in their eyes, and that nothing but a salutary dread of results has prevented them from reducing their theory to practice.

CHAPTER IX.

Extra session of Congress. — Colonel Pratt takes his seat. — Polk elected speaker. — State of parties. — Character of the third party. — Colonel Pratt firm as a partisan. — Appointed on the committee on the militia. — Appointed on the committee on public buildings. — Legaré, character of. — Makes a report on the materials suitable for the public buildings. — Architectural taste. — Anecdote. — Courtesy. — Virginia delegates visit Colonel Pratt. — General post-office building. — Its beauty. — Cheap postage suggested by Colonel Pratt, in 1836. — Provision in relation to foreign seeds and plants. — Government should not manufacture for itself. — Individual enterprise favored.

THE extra session of Congress called by the president commenced on the 4th of September, 1837; and COLONEL PRATT was present on the first day, and took his seat. Mr. Polk — afterwards President of the United States — was chosen speaker. This was regarded as an administration triumph; but was really owing as much to the well-known high qualities of the speaker as a presiding officer, as to any other cause. On the question of electing a public printer, the administration party was beaten, and a member of the so called *conservative party* was chosen. This party was composed of a few persons who had originally belonged to the democratic party, but who, becoming dissatisfied with the financial policy of the administration, and not wishing to unite with the whigs at a single step, had formed a third party, which made up, by intrigue and unscrupulous



View of Prattsville Tannery, on the Rocks, 1844.
at which a million sides of sole leather were Tanned in 20 years, by Hon. Z. Pratt, A. M.

action, what it lacked in moral powers, high talents, and numbers. With the exception of an eminent Virginia statesman, who, by joining them, prostrated his political character, hardly a man of high intellectual powers was to be found in the faction. Their importance consisted in the uncertain resorts to incidental acts of cunning, and their position was based upon no principle, except to oppose whatever was originated with the other parties, which were nearly balanced. They had something to do with the defeat of the democratic party in 1840, but more with that total failure of the whigs which occurred in 1841, and which was the consequence of the inordinate expectations excited in the previous year, when men became infatuated, and believed in extravagant promises of statesmen, and were led to believe that a sort of political millennium was to follow from a mere change of administration, not accompanied, or proposed to be followed, by a single organic modification, or social revolution. The conservatives proved themselves quite sufficient to ruin any party with which they connected themselves. Their friendship was more fatal than their enmity. They were to the politics of this country what Lord Stanley, the Duke of Richmond, and some few other supporters of the Reform Ministry, became to parties in England, after the whig party there broke up through its own weight. It would, however, be very unjust to these English statesmen not to say that they were in all respects the

superiors of those who sought to imitate their action in America.

Colonel Pratt manifested no sympathy for the class of politicians of which we have spoken. He was a democrat from conviction. He saw that the good of the country imperatively demanded the continuance in power of the democratic party. He had been chosen a representative in a season of apparent general prosperity, by a democratic constituency, and he did not see in the reverses of that party any reason for a change of opinion or position. The more vehemently the enemy assailed what he was firmly convinced was the soundest policy for the country, the more earnest were his labors in its defence. Increased danger was the signal for greatly increased exertions on his part to avert it. His was no holiday attachment; and we shall find him, on all occasions, pursuing that course which was best calculated to aid his party, while it exalted his own reputation.

The standing committees were announced on the 10th of September, and Colonel Pratt was appointed a member of the committee on the militia. His knowledge of military affairs, his comprehensive views of their importance, and his ardent desire to have all the national defences in proper order, were guarantees that the labors of the committee would be thoroughly performed.

On the 11th of December, after the commencement of the second session of Congress, Colonel Pratt was appointed to serve on the committee on public buildings.

Perhaps there was no committee of Congress on which he was better qualified to serve than this ; and it is certain that the labor which he performed, as a member of it, was immense, and eminently useful, in numerous respects, to the country. His colleagues on the committee were Messrs. Lincoln of Massachusetts, Legaré* of South Carolina, Mercer of Virginia, and Jackson of Georgia, men remarkable for their general knowledge, and for the versatility of their talents. The committee was, indeed, constituted with singular felicity, — particular reference being had to the objects of its creation. The members possessed practical knowledge, severe and correct taste, and sound judgment ; so that they were fully competent to decide how far the arts of architecture, painting and sculpture, may be made sub-

* We are reminded, by the mention of this gentleman's name, of the points of difference which he presented to Colonel Pratt. Mr. Legaré was a man of extensive attainments, and his reading was not confined to beaten paths. He was one of the very few Americans who at that time had anything like a correct idea of the history and constitution of Rome. His reputation as a lawyer was deservedly high ; and it was his ambition to occupy a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States. His oratory was always good, and often surpassingly beautiful. Yet, with all his learning and ability, he distrusted the people, and at one period of his life indulged in the most imprudent denunciations of anything of a popular character. His associations were unfavorable, at this time, to the growth of enlarged views. Colonel Pratt, unlike Mr. Legaré, had passed his life among the people, and did not look to books to find out what men were. He had risen from the mass himself, and was still proud to be counted as a mechanic — one of the working men of the country. He had a confidence in their abiding integrity, which was fully justified by actual experience ; and he needed no theory to sustain facts which had transpired within the limits of his own knowledge.

servient to purposes of national utility, with a due regard to economy, and existing circumstances, place, climate, time and design.

On the 28th of January, 1839, Colonel Pratt moved an inquiry respecting the materials of which the public buildings in Washington were constructed; and four weeks later, on the 25th of February, he made a report on the question, *What material should be preferred in the construction of such buildings?* Sandstone had been used, and the question was then between granite and marble. The report which he presented on this subject was much admired at the time, and it has proved to be a most valuable document for purposes of practical reference. It may be found, at length, in the second part of this work.

Colonel Pratt, in his report, took the ground of *true economy*, which does not always imply the outlay of a small amount of money for the accomplishment of a certain purpose. He believed that the PUBLIC BUILDINGS should not only be sufficiently spacious to accommodate the public business, but that they should—that end being kept steadily in view—be made to ornament the nation's capital, and be constructed for endurance. He held—with one of the greatest minds of our day—that government should promote other ends beside the chief end, if in so doing it does not sacrifice any practical element.

“Though it is desirable that every institution should have a main end,” says Mr. Macaulay, “and should be

so formed as to be in the highest degree efficient for that main end, yet if, without any sacrifice of its efficiency for that end, it can promote any other good end, it ought to do so. Thus, the end for which a hospital is built is the relief of the sick, not the beautifying of the street. To sacrifice the health of the sick to splendor of architectural effect ; to place the building in bad air, only that it may present a more commanding front to a great public square ; to make the walls hotter or cooler than they ought to be, in order that the columns and windows of the exterior may please the passers-by, would be monstrous. But if, without sacrifice of the chief object, the hospital can be made an ornament to the metropolis, it would be absurd not to make it so."

This was precisely Colonel Pratt's view of the subject which he had under consideration : he sought, first, the public convenience, and then aimed at the erection of buildings which should beautify the capital.

In his report, he clearly demonstrated the folly of using sandstone for the public structures. Its tendency to absorb water, and its liability to injury from the weather, unite to render it the worst possible material for building. He showed that fifteen cubic feet of this stone, weighing one ton, would absorb seventy-three and a half pounds of water to a cubic foot ; whereas, the same body of granite or marble would not absorb any sensible quantity. A building constructed of sandstone can never be thoroughly dry. Marble and granite

require no exterior defence, while sandstone requires frequent painting, which will not wholly prevent absorption, though it may diminish its amount. Other objections to sandstone were urged, for which the reader is referred to the report itself. To offset them all, it could only be urged, that sandstone is more easily wrought than other materials. Colonel Pratt then showed that marble could be furnished at cheaper rates than granite, including the cost of working; but, as some difference of opinion existed in the committee as to the relative prices of granite and marble, the report recommended that, until the question should be settled, all government buildings should be constructed of either marble or granite, as circumstances might dictate—preference being given to marble whenever it should be found to be as cheap as granite.

We may, with singular propriety, relate an anecdote, in this connection, which illustrates the peculiar promptness of Colonel Pratt in all business matters, whether of a public or of a private nature.

Our readers cannot be ignorant of the different degrees of formality practised by public men in their intercourse with citizens who have interests to defend, and of the real necessity which, all must admit, exists, of exercising, to say the least, in such intercourse, a common prudence. Some are distant and reserved in their manners, seeming to think that silence, or the absence of cordiality, constitutes true official dignity; while others say too much, promise too much, and seldom fulfil in anything.

But few, when placed in authority, combine the characteristics of a true gentleman. But few can take the petitioner by the hand, and assure him of an earnest welcome, and of a sincere interest in his business, without compromising duty, or gaining a reputation either for ignorance or intentional neglect.

It was not so with Colonel Pratt. His courtesy was quite equal to his promptness, and his frankness was only surpassed by his profound reverence for justice. His eye, his smile, the tones of his voice, and the close grasp of his faithful hand, all indicated the man. He granted favors with heartfelt pleasure,—he refused them with unaffected regret. If he could not say yes, his manner and his reasons would satisfy any honest man that any answer but “no” would be culpable. But to our anecdote :

In 1839, when Colonel Pratt was so active a member of the committee on public buildings, and the Secretary of the Treasury had suspended the work of the mechanics on the treasury building, with a view to determine the question respecting the material to be used in its erection, he was waited upon, at the capitol, by a delegation of twenty-one mechanics from Virginia, to confer with him in regard to a subject in which their interests were essentially involved.

He was called out from his seat, and received a portion of the delegation with his usual courtesy and cordiality. “We have called on business,” said one of the number, “which is important to us, at least ; and we

wish to know on what day we can have an interview with you." "To-day," said the colonel. "At what hour?" "Now," was the response. "At what place?" was the third inquiry; and the answer was instant, and still in a single word, — "Here."

Finding that they had to deal with a man who neither waited nor asked others to wait, they proceeded to state directly the object of their visit. They were interested in the working of a quarry of sandstone, in Virginia, which was owned by government, and which was purchased, and even worked, in the time of Washington. He was reminded that it was government property, and that, should he adhere to the recommendation contained in his report, to use nothing but granite or marble, they would be injured in their business, and government would lose in the cost of material, as well as in the cost of labor. They spoke of what others had said upon the subject, what others had proposed, of what others had done. They felt sure that he would be willing to listen to them, — they being mechanics, — as he had always claimed to be still one of their class, and evinced a deep interest in their welfare."*

After listening patiently to all they had to say, he remarked, with evident feeling: "I understand your case; I can see it all. My friends," he continued, "it

* It has been said, by a modern writer, that "one of the greatest requisites is the art of listening discreetly. To listen is a delicate piece of flattery, and a compliment so gratifying as to surely recommend you." This accomplishment is possessed by few men in a greater degree than by Colonel Pratt.

is a plain matter to see your interests and your wants. It is proper, it is right, that you should make them known ; otherwise, you would do yourselves injustice. Indeed, it is strictly a business of your own. You say that you are mechanics, — *I am one* ; that you are of the people, — *so am I*. You are all resolved, I doubt not, to serve your country faithfully, in whatever capacity you may be called upon to act ; — *so am I*. As business men, you are bound to look after your own interests ; for, unless you do this yourselves, it is quite impossible for you to thrive. I am a business man, and am placed here to labor for the good of twenty millions of people and their descendants. You are of the number, — I am one of your servants. I shall be true to you, true to all, and true to my country. It is only by pursuing this course that I can be true to the principles of right, which I prize far above the possession of wealth.

“ What I can do for you, as an honest man, I will do, with all my heart, and with great pleasure. But this, my friends, is a very plain business, and may be very easily understood. If you suppose it possible to persuade me that sandstone is as good for a public building as marble or granite, I can assure you that you will meet with no success, because I know to the contrary. It is not a matter of opinion, but a matter of *fact* ; and when I have knowledge, I never speculate against it. We have the best of governments ; and it

will not be my fault, if we do not have the best of buildings.”

Such boldness and fairness, and so kindly spoken, instantly settled the question. The delegation saw immediately that the chairman of the committee not only understood his business, but he knew the difference between honestly using knowledge, and the passive submission to error for selfish purposes.

It was to this report that the nation owed the erection of that beautiful marble edifice, the General Post-office, universally conceded to be the finest structure of its dimensions in the United States. But for Colonel Pratt's exertions, that building would have been made of coarse, porous and fragile sandstone.

“It is to the untiring perseverance of Colonel PRATT,” said the *Washington Globe*, in 1841, “that we are mainly indebted for this beautiful specimen of the mechanic arts. He is a practical man, — himself a mechanic, — who has arisen to affluence and distinction by his energy of character and unyielding integrity. It was his practical knowledge and perseverance that enabled him to break down the opposition to the white marble, of which he proposed that this building should be constructed. Justice, then, requires that praise should be awarded where it is merited.”

As this fine building covered almost the whole ground possessed by the government on the square where it stands, Colonel PRATT recommended that all the adjoining private property then unoccupied should be pur-

chased for public use, which was done. He saw that the rapidly increasing business of the government, in the postal department, would render more room necessary; and time has proved that the purchase was one of importance.

In this connection, it is proper to mention that Colonel PRATT has always been an advocate of cheap postage, — the subject having attracted his particular attention some time before he entered Congress. The anomalous character of the then existing system of postage, whereby the burden of supporting the department was thrown upon the poor, could not fail to strike a man of his sagacity, and general knowledge. He saw that the rates of postage were made to bear most unequally upon the different classes of men who avail themselves of mail facilities; and he could not understand the justice of the franking privilege enjoyed by members of Congress, and which was the source of great abuses. Thus regarding the system that then prevailed, and anxious to do his part in removing, or, at least, in attempting to remove, a great evil, he, on the 19th of March, 1838, — but a few months after he had taken his seat in the House, — as soon, indeed, as he had made the inquiries necessary to enable him to act judiciously on the subject, — introduced a resolution looking to the immediate reduction of the rates of postage to the lowest practical standard; and he brought a large amount of statistical information to bear upon the question, showing how the old system operated on various parts of the

country. His general labors had great effect in bringing about that condition of opinion which has, at last, led to the abolition of *a tax* on intelligence and comfort, and to the maintenance of friendly feelings, and the progress of civilization.

About the same time that Colonel Pratt was engaged in advocating the reduction of postage, he engaged in another undertaking, calculated to have an important bearing on the interests of the most important class of producers. On the 12th of March, 1838, he introduced a resolution providing that foreign seeds and plants should be procured by our government, and distributed, free of cost, among the farmers of the United States. This was one of those acts which do not attract much attention at the time of their occurrence, but which are attended with the most important consequences. Already has much good resulted from it, and much more must follow. The number of our productions has been increased, and the character of all has been raised. So various is our climate, that there is scarcely an article that the earth produces which cannot be made our own, and afford scope, in its cultivation, to American ingenuity and enterprise.

Colonel Pratt never omitted a good opportunity of making use of all constitutional and legal means to advance the welfare of the great agricultural interests of this Union, whether its members are employed on the plantations of the south, or on the farms of the north and west. Their welfare he considered identical

with the welfare of all others, and with the prosperity and the glory of the republic.

In a debate, which grew out of a motion to increase the appropriation for national armories from three hundred thousand to three hundred and sixty thousand dollars, Colonel Pratt showed his zeal for the interest of the mechanics. He advocated the increased appropriation, but at the same time contended that government should not manufacture for itself, but should continue to produce its arms by contract, as formerly. "Government," he said, "had business enough of its own, in attending to its proper departments, without entering upon that of a great manufacturer. So far as economy was concerned, all the advantages were on the side of the contract system. All experience showed that, in establishments owned and carried on by government, there never could be that strict economy which is so common in manufactories of private individuals or companies. This was the reason why such individuals and companies could manufacture articles so much cheaper for government than the government could for itself. He was for exciting a healthy competition among mechanics; for keeping up that spirit of emulation by which all their ingenuity is brought into play, and improvements effected in the mechanic arts which might otherwise never be known to the world. For various other reasons, he was opposed to governments going into the manufacturing business. In times of high party excitement, it would be impossible to prevent the con-

flict from finding its way into the government workshops. The party which should succeed would probably be induced to make political preferences, and employ only those who suited its political views ; and thus, with the rise and fall of every administration, would be seen the discharge of one set of workmen, and the employment of another set. Could anything be imagined more likely to be adverse to all mechanical excellence, to the production of good articles, to the sentiment of self-respect among the workmen ? He wished to see the mechanics of this country on high and independent ground, beyond the influence of mere party ; the position, in short, which they now held. For himself, he desired never to see any man's labor so connected with government as to bias and control, in the remotest degree, his political opinions. Public offices belong to the nation, and are not created for the benefit of private individuals, or conferred upon them for that purpose, but for the general welfare. But a man's labor is a man's private property ; it is exclusively his own, and he alone has the right to guard and protect it. He deprecated a state of things which would tend to violate so sacred a right ; and therefore it was that he was opposed to government manufactures, or government monopoly. He was himself a mechanic, and he was proud to acknowledge himself as belonging to a class of men who were the ornaments of their country, and whose labor and skill had so much to do in creating its wealth ; and, to the extent of his power, he was deter-

mined to protect their interests. Believing, as he did, that it was a saving on the part of government to purchase their arms by contract, he should vote for the amendment. Labor should be left untrammelled, and free as air."

CHAPTER X.

Close of Colonel Pratt's first session in Congress. — Address to his constituents.

— Declines a reëlection. — Proposes the construction of a Dry Dock in Brooklyn. — Speech. — Comparative claims of New York and Philadelphia. — Branch Mint in New York. — Increase of salaries of mechanics and clerks proposed. — Construction of steam frigates. — National defence. — Called "*the working member*." — Opinion of John Quincy Adams. — Anecdote of Colonel Pratt and the Postmaster General.

THE session of Congress in which Colonel Pratt first served closed in the early part of the summer of 1838. On the 4th of July, he announced to his constituents that he should not be a candidate for reëlection. The announcement was made in a brief but able address, which the reader may find in another part of this volume. It is a specimen of composition worthy of general imitation. It is to the point, and all can understand it.

In the last session of the twenty-fifth Congress, Colonel Pratt took a leading part in the proceedings. Besides his labors on the subject of the public buildings, already spoken of, he gave his attention to other questions of importance, prominent among which was that relating to the construction of a Dry Dock at Brooklyn, New York, on which he made one of the very few regular speeches that he ever delivered.

This speech was made on the 18th of March, 1839,



three days before the termination of the last session of the Congress to which Colonel Pratt had been chosen. It may be found in the second part of this volume, and the reader will perceive that it was one of those speeches which are made for advancing the business to which they relate, and not for mere political effect. It abounds with historical and statistical information, and is one of those documents which will be found most useful by the future historian of the country. The sentiments advanced are thoroughly national. "I shall," said Colonel Pratt, "in the first place, examine this question in a national point of view. I will throw aside State pride, and merge the interest of the State in the national interest. This is the ground we should all take, though, unfortunately, some gentlemen have attempted to bring the question into the common vortex of a local scramble, without regard to the public weal. But, when this should be the issue, he would not shrink from a comparison of the site contemplated for the creation of the dock in his own state, with Philadelphia, or any other place, nor relinquish the claims of his state to those of any other. It was deeply to be regretted that this kind of legislation had too much obtained; but it is not too late to correct it, and the sooner we do it the better, because it will prevent a great and useless expenditure, or rather waste, of the public money, which, by management and compromise, is applied to other than national objects, resulting, in fact, to the benefit of individuals, and not to that of the

nation, and the end of which there are none in this hall who can anticipate, or who can foretell the always exhausted and deranged condition of our public treasury, the onerous taxation to replenish it, and the consequent strife and disaffection of the people, and their distrust of our institutions. Whenever I hear the question stated that A gets more of the public money than B, I feel some forebodings for the future. I feel that, should it become a settled principle in our government that B shall have as much of the people's money as A, notwithstanding his wants are not so great, — or, in other words, that it cannot be applied to the use of B without great waste, or, indeed, a total loss, — I feel, I say, that the great national interests, the army and navy and civil service, must become dilapidated and broken up; the commercial, agricultural and manufacturing interests be deprived of their proper stimulants; and this nation, like all others that have preceded it, become enervated, dwindle into insignificance, and be despised by all well-conducted governments on the earth. What a great responsibility, then, rests upon us, and how strongly are we called upon to make use of all proper means to prevent such fatal results. We should, in this national hall, spurn all attempts to create other than national interests, — interests which shall embrace the whole country. The States, by their inherent sovereign power, can regulate their own peculiar interests, and thus protect them against the overshadowing influence of the national government.

He then proceeded to show how fit a site was afforded by Brooklyn for a Dry Dock, and how necessary it was that such a Dock should be there constructed, to subserve the public interest. He proved, by a tabular statement of the number of national vessels which had entered the port of New York in a given time, that the so called "claims" of Philadelphia could bear no comparison with those of the commercial metropolis of the republic, if the question were to be determined in that way. For the want of a Dry Dock at Brooklyn, the expense of repairing public ships at the navy-yard there had been increased, it should seem, about one-half. The tonnage of New York exceeded that of Philadelphia in the proportion of eleven to one; and the value of imports in that of almost six to one, during a term of nine years. The superiority of New York, in all respects, was clearly set forth; and, in conclusion, Colonel PRATT said:

"It is with pleasure that I recur to the state of prosperity which New York presents. The representatives of that great state can say, with pride, that she has within her bounds the main artery of the Union, — that she disperses the life-blood through the whole commercial system; and the statistics which I have furnished, in connection with this subject, irrefutably establish the fact. We are proud that such is her position, not from local, narrow views, but because her greatness adds so much to the honor and fame of the *whole* United States. I go, sir, for my country, and for that which will most benefit

it in the aggregate ; and whenever I am satisfied of the *utility* of an appropriation *in a national point of view*, I shall be found ready to record my vote in its favor, whether it apply to the North or the South, to the East or to the West. All I ask is, that gentlemen will act on an equally liberal principle ; and that they will do so, I shall be slow to doubt.”

No subject has been more often agitated in Congress than that of establishing a branch of the national Mint in the city of New York, and yet without anything being done to carry out what is clearly the popular will. That the great mercantile city of America should not only be without a Mint, but that the proposition to establish one there should be steadily opposed, year after year, as if it were something calculated to injure the public interest, something monstrous and absurd, is among the facts which cause plain people to wonder at what may be denominated governmental paradoxes. They are not aware how slow are even the best governments to move in the work of reform, nor how potent are special interests to prevent changes from being effected which are clearly demanded by the general good. Col. Pratt is one of those who have labored earnestly and much to have a branch Mint established in the city of New York. He moved for a bill for that purpose in the session of 1839.

On the question of increasing the salaries of certain clerks employed in the departments at Washington, a motion to that effect having been made by Mr. Dromgoole, of Virginia, Col. Pratt spoke with much point and effect.

After alluding, in spirited terms, to the political and social positions of the persons whose pay it was proposed to increase, he said : “ He would ask gentlemen to look at the mechanics and workingmen in the government’s employ, who labored from sun to sun, and who emphatically earned their bread by the sweat of their brow, and received, perhaps, the pittance of one dollar and fifty cents per day. Their pay should be increased, as they were the men who were building up the navy, and adding to the wealth of the country. They were quite as meritorious as those whose pay it was proposed to increase ; and their employment, to say the least of it, was as intellectual as that of mere scribes, or examiners of accounts. He sincerely wished that he could aid in paying this class of men more in accordance with their merits and their usefulness. He hoped that the amendment would be rejected ; but, if there was to be an increase of pay, let it be done in the regular manner, at the next session, and include the working men, as well as the clerks.”

At the time of which we are writing, the difficulties between this country and England, on the North-eastern Boundary, appeared as if they would lead to war. The subject being under discussion in the House, Col. Pratt offered an amendment to the bill providing for the construction of three steam frigates. He said :

“ He could not let the opportunity pass without saying a few words in support of the amendment. He would much prefer giving a silent vote, if he could do it, and perform his duty to his country. He was for peace, and

had no doubt but the country desired peace, if it could be preserved on honorable terms. But, whether peace or war was wished, it was due to the people that the country should be placed in a state of defence. It is our duty, as their representatives, and as the guardians of their rights, to see that the country is prepared to meet and repel invasion. He did not know that invasion was likely to happen, but we should make ready for the worst. We should, as prudent men, prepare for war : and, for that purpose, we should place all necessary means at the disposal of those who are at the head of the government. As the times wore a threatening aspect, he would suggest, as one of the best modes of defence, the building of three steam frigates in the shortest possible time. He said that the nations of Europe, with whom, in all probability, we should be brought into collision, were an age in advance of us in this mode of warfare, and were keeping up with the improvements of the times, while we adhered to old systems. The whole mode of warfare would, in a few years, be changed, and for that change we should be preparing. He referred to the facility with which an European naval power could send its steamships and bombard our defenceless cities ; and alluded, particularly, to the improved condition of the navy of England, —that power having a large steam force, as had France, while the same arm of the Russian marine was more than respectable.”

During his Congressional career, Col. Pratt was called the “ working member.” He never missed attending

the House during the whole of his term of service, and he gave the utmost attention to every question that was discussed. He often took part in debate; but, as has been before observed, rarely made what are known as "set speeches." His name will be found to occur very often in the reported proceedings of Congress, especially in accounts of the transaction of business. But a very small part of what is done by a faithful member of Congress can be made to appear, in even the most thorough and complete report of the proceedings of that body. He has much to do of which the public can know nothing. His correspondence, especially if he be a man of standing and influence, must be large, and always demanding prompt attention. The demands upon the time of Colonel Pratt, in this respect, were constant and numerous.

When he was particularly active, one day, in the House, in putting his short and practical interrogatories to the members engaged in the debate, the question was asked of John Quincy Adams, *who it was* that was so ready to act in all directions and with so much skill. "That is Col. Pratt, of Prattsville, New York, the tanner. If he had our experience, with his practical knowledge, he would be a match for us all."

To show with what peculiar thoroughness he performed his public duties, we may here state the fact, that, even before he took his seat in Congress, he had prepared, at his own expense, and for his own personal convenience, a map of the district which he was to represent, together

with a list of the postmasters therein, the date of their appointments, the amount of their compensation, and that of the mail-carriers ; the distances between the several post-offices ; the length of the various routes, and whether the mails were carried by railroad, steamboat, stage, wagon, or on horseback. He was thus in possession of a thorough knowledge of the local circumstances of his district, and was ever ready to answer any question that related thereto, and to defend or explain the true interests of his constituents. Besides, he had a list of nearly two thousand of the most respectable citizens of his district, of the different trades and professions, to whom he sent all such public documents as he deemed useful. In this again we see his love of system. On reference to his book, any one could tell the particular disposition of the numerous documents which are usually placed at the disposal of the members. The title, number and date, are all detailed with scrupulous exactness. Before leaving for Washington, it was his practice to make all necessary arrangements, in his private affairs, for the time he expected to be absent, so that his public labors might not be interrupted by calls from home.

Something of his peculiar manner may be inferred from a short anecdote which we will relate.

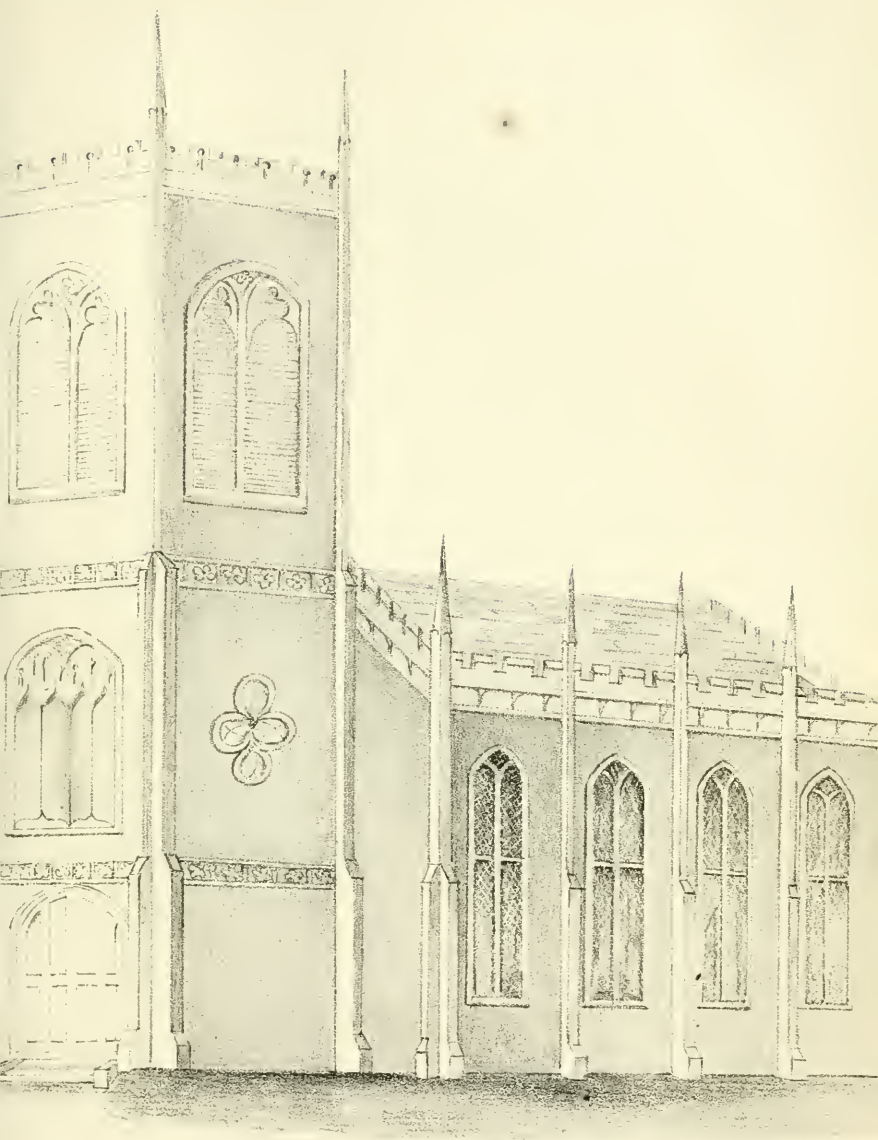
Soon after the commencement of a session, he had occasion to call on the Postmaster General. Seeing that he was engaged, though disposed to be quite polite, Col. Pratt remarked, bowing, " Sir, I have the honor

to represent the 11th District in the State of New York. I shall have occasion to call on you. But I shall not trouble you when you are busy, nor shall I ask two things in one day. Good-morning, sir.”

CHAPTER XI.

Retires from office. — Again nominated for Congress (1842). — Personal sacrifices. — Political changes and events of 1840. — Nomination of General Harrison for the presidency. — Success and subsequent disappointment of the whigs. — Veto of President Tyler. — Whig party in the minority. — Colonel Pratt takes his seat in Congress, December, 1843. — Appointed chairman of committee on public buildings. — Moves for a uniform return of all the banks. — Proposes again a national mint in New York. — Refunding of the fine imposed on General Jackson, in 1815. — States in favor of the measure. — Naturalization laws — triumph of democracy in 1800. — Native American party. — Bureau of statistics proposed by Colonel Pratt. — Note. — Considerations respecting compliment of Mr. Cobb. — Growth of the country. — Reānnexation of Texas. — Report on the North and South. — Information asked for respecting Texas. — Whitney's railroad project. — Trade with Japan. — Reform in the patent office. — Journal of the Franklin Institute. — Preservation of the flags, &c., taken in war. — National monument to Washington. — Proposition to have government property reported in schedule, every two years. — Distribution of national medals. — New public buildings proposed to be erected. — Paulding's letter. — Anecdote of Dromgoole and Pratt. — Report on banking in the District of Columbia. — "Gold spoons" of Van Buren. — Repairing of the President's house. — Curtains. — Example of extraordinary patriotism — interesting anecdote. — Colonel Pratt and Mr. Hammatt. — Loan of marquees to agricultural societies. — Political career of Colonel Pratt. — Address to his constituents. — Declines reëlection. — Newspaper press. — Anecdote of Pratt and C. J. Ingersoll.

ON retiring from Congress, in the spring of 1839, it had been Col. Pratt's intention never again to be a candidate for a seat in that eminent body. To the resolution which he then adopted he would have adhered, but that a sense of duty led him to accept the nomination tendered



EPISCOPAL CHURCH.
Erected 1845.



him in the autumn of 1842, by the democracy of his district.

The sacrifice which he made was great ; but, as he had never allowed personal interest to stand in the way of the full performance of public duties, he could not depart from the path which he had marked out for himself, pursued with so much honor and usefulness.

Since Colonel Pratt had closed the period of his first term in Congress, the country had experienced many changes. When his first term had expired, the democratic party had partially recovered from the depressed condition in which it had passed the year 1837. It had, throughout 1838, gained, on the whole, though it was far from having won back the proud position it had occupied when General Jackson's presidency had reached its close. Still, in March, 1839, there was much to encourage an observing man, who was attached to democratic principles. The political events, too, of that year, were of a character to leave the impression, that, before the presidential election should occur, the democratic policy would have commended itself to the warm support of the majority of the people. But under this fair show were lurking the seeds of the greatest evils, the elements of a vast change, the causes of the greatest defeat ever experienced by the patriotic and constitutional democratic party, — and springs of action that have not even now spent their force. The democracy, confident of victory, and, for once, *dreaming* only of their past acts, when they should

have been *laboring* for the future, were marching to the edge of a precipice covered with flowers.

The union of all the discordant materials of the opposition party, — the fusion, for a time, of a number of factions into a vast political organization, animated by no common principle of action, and knowing no bond of union but a deep-seated, concentrated hate of that party which had directed the national energies for almost forty years, — took place in the year 1840, a year that will be memorable as long as liberty shall exist in the occidental world.

Toward the close of 1839, the Whig National Convention met at Harrisburg, in Pennsylvania, and placed General William Henry Harrison in nomination for the presidency. All the great statesmen of the whig party suspended judgment and action, in the hope that the mazes of expediency might prevail, in the absence of substantial reasons. The ardent and brilliant Clay, who had sacrificed himself for the whig cause, and who has been looked upon as the type and embodiment of whig principles, — the profound Webster, who has done so much honor to the whig party, — were both discarded, as were all the inferior whig statesmen, and a gentleman of respectable military standing was selected to lead the opposition. Of the incidents of the great contest that followed, this is not the place to speak. Suffice it to say, that, after one of the warmest political contests that had ever been witnessed in the country, the democracy were beaten, and the opposition remained, at the close, complete masters of the field.

They were, indeed, victorious; but the fruits of victory were to be as ashes in their mouths. The newly elected president died in a month after his inauguration. Mr. Tyler, who had been elected vice-president, and who, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, succeeded to the presidency, on the death of General Harrison, proved to be adverse to the designs of the party, the success of which had led to his unexpected elevation. The most violent quarrels broke out among the men who had united for no purpose except to defeat the democratic party, and destroy a democratic administration. In less than six months, the Harrison cabinet was broken up, and the veto power, that special abhorrence of the whig party, had been repeatedly exercised at the expense of their favorite measure, a national bank. Of the great party, which, but a twelve-month before, had threatened to trample upon and extinguish the democracy, which had stood up against the wars of half a century, nothing remained worthy of the name. The elections which took place between the summer of 1841 and the close of the autumn of 1842 left the whig party in a hopeless minority; in that condition which may, however, be said to be hopeful, from the very excess of its depression,—any change being for the better. The Congress which succeeded that elected under the effect of the “hard cider” orgies of 1840, was found to be so strongly democratic as to lead to fears that the victors might imitate the conduct of the whigs, and

quarrel among themselves,—a not unfrequent result of party strength.

It was in the House of Representatives, thus strongly democratic, and at a most important period of our political history, that Colonel Pratt took his seat, in December, 1843. He became, at once, a most active member, assuming a position similar to that which he had held five years before.

On the 4th of January, 1844, he offered a resolution, providing “that the Secretary of the Treasury should furnish, annually, a uniform return of all the banks in the Union ; giving the number in each State, the amount of capital, bills in circulation, specie, deposits, loans, discounts, &c.,—with the indebtedness of the states and United States, the import and export of specie and bullion, and also the amount of imports paying duty, the amount of revenue collected thereon, and the amount of articles free of duty ; also, the amount of foreign articles exported, and that of goods the produce or manufacture of the country, and also the tonnage of the same, in the tabular form called for by the resolution.”

On the 12th of January, 1844, Colonel Pratt, for the second time, moved to establish a branch of the National Mint in the city of New York, not having been discouraged by his previous failure. He brought statistics to show that more specie was imported into that city than into any other port in the Union, and that it exceeded the amount received at Philadelphia in the proportion of fifteen to one. These facts, and others of a similar char-

acter, showed conclusively that the Mint should have been established at New York, instead of Philadelphia. The great commercial city of the country (and seven-tenths of the revenue were collected at New York) should have means of coinage. He alluded to the fact that our circulation was largely composed of foreign coin, owing to our neglect to provide the means of re-coinage. This was bad policy on the part of a republican government, and reflected discredit upon it.

The question of refunding the fine paid by General Jackson, in 1815,—a fine inflicted on him by a public functionary, whose skill was akin to treason, whose judgment to disgrace, as an evidence of the spite felt against one who had inflicted on the arms of Britain the severest defeat they ever met with in America, — was much discussed in the first session of the twenty-fifth Congress. That it ever should have been discussed, — that an American Congress should have hesitated, for one moment, about paying back the amount of an unjust and illegal imposition, — reflects no great credit either on the sagacity or the patriotism of some of those who composed it.

On the 11th of January, 1844, Colonel Pratt presented the resolutions of the Legislature of New York, instructing the senators and requesting the representatives of that state in Congress to use their utmost exertions to procure the passage of a bill refunding the amount of the fine to the citizen-soldier who had so brilliantly defended the south-west against the English. The part which Colonel Pratt took in the discussion was marked by his

usual good sense, and patriotic zeal ; and the facts which he laid before the House, bearing upon the question, were of the most pertinent character, and had much to do with the final decision of the question. He showed that the Legislatures of eighteen states, which states contained almost fifteen of the seventeen millions of people in our country at the last preceding census, had passed resolves in favor of the restoration of the amount of the fine. This was a practical view of the subject, and probably had more weight with some men than the real merits of the case. Not so, however, with Colonel Pratt. He had never entertained any doubts on the subject ; but his knowledge of human nature made him aware how convincing such statistics could not fail to be, with a certain order of minds. *

* The States which had, through their legislatures, instructed their senators and representatives to vote for refunding the amount of the fine *imposed* — literally so — on General Jackson, were Arkansas, Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, Mississippi, Michigan, New York, New Hampshire, North Carolina, South Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Virginia. At the census of 1840, these states contained 14,645,106 inhabitants. As to the merits of the question, no man who has examined the subject can have even the slightest doubt of the strict legality and propriety of General Jackson's conduct. It has often been said, by General Jackson's friends, too, that the *excuse* for his conduct is to be found in the circumstances of the time and place ; but a careful examination of the facts will be sufficient to convince any reasonable man that his conduct requires no *excuse* or defence. The mere statement of the facts affords not only his complete justification, but also the utter condemnation of the other parties. His conduct was in all respects lawful. The reader who wishes to become familiar with this subject is referred to the Democratic Review for January, 1843, where he will find an able paper on the subject, from the pen of the Hon. Amos Kendall.

The requirements of our naturalization laws have always appeared to Colonel Pratt as short-sighted and unfriendly; and he made an effort to have them modified, but without success. He holds to those liberal views in relation to foreigners which were so common at the time when the original naturalization laws were passed, more than sixty years ago. The recollections of the Revolution were then fresh in men's minds, and did not allow them to entertain those uncharitable opinions which have since found advocates in a country of increasing power. The success of the Revolutionary war was largely owing to foreigners, and Americans sought to show their gratitude by placing them on an almost equal footing with themselves. With the pronounced ascendancy of federalism, during the presidency of John Adams, came the *sedition law*, which made every man in the country of foreign birth the slave of the government. The triumph of the democracy, in 1800, led to the repeal of that law; but the naturalization laws, which had been made with severity by the federalists, were not restored to the liberal state in which they had existed in the earliest days of the republic. A sort of compromise of two extremes was adopted, and has existed until our time. Believing that the character of our country would be elevated by the adoption of a more liberal policy, and that its interests would also be thereby advanced, Colonel Pratt sought to bring about a change. His labors were directed to that end at the very time when the party known as the Native American party was most active.

It is not possible to overrate the importance of statistical knowledge. For the want of such knowledge, reformers not unfrequently do quite as much mischief as good. Based on such knowledge, however, having for their object the improvement of mankind, which greater chances of success than can be claimed in many other circumstances. Colonel Pratt's habits in life lead him highly to appreciate the science of statistics, and he has never lost any opportunity of advancing its interests. At this time he gave a striking proof of his desire to promote it, by the legitimate aid of government.

On the 29th of January, 1844, he moved the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the expediency of establishing a "BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND COMMERCE," to be connected with the Treasury Department. He said that,

"Whilst nearly every government in Europe has had its Home Department,—or, at least, an equivalent, under the name of Board of Trade, Bureau of Commerce, or Department of Statistics,—the United States had been working their way, in a great measure, in the dark, for the want of similar assistants; or with such partial and wavering lights as emanated from isolated facts, and often erroneous statements, in which none of that confidence could be placed which is derived from information systematically arranged, or from principles based upon experience. The most enlightened governments of Europe have spared neither exertion nor expense in collecting facts which throw light upon the internal con-

dition and foreign relations of their respective countries. But they were once new countries, like our own. England has long enjoyed the advantages desirable from her *Board of Trade* ; France has her *Bureau de Commerce* ; Austria, her *Statistical Bureau* ; and the statistics of Prussia, of Belgium, and of the states of the German Customs' League have been committed to the care of persons abundantly able to do them justice. The efforts made by the Russian government to obtain statistical returns from every part of that immense empire are deserving of all praise. Nearly the whole of Europe appears to be alive to the great importance of statistical information. It is, indeed, a matter of both surprise and regret, that so little has hitherto been done in this country, by the general government, to promote this object. It is true that we have a great mass of statistical knowledge in the volumes of Seybert and Pitkin, in the Congressional documents, in the National Calendar of Peter Force, in the volumes of the American Almanac, in the publications of Hazard and Niles, and in Hunt's Magazine. But it is scattered, and, therefore, practically useless. To be really useful, it should be collected, and made of easy access."

Colonel Pratt closed his remarks by saying that so palpable a deficiency could not fail to attract the attention of every business man in Congress ; and that it was hoped measures would be taken to remedy the evil ; and he then offered his resolution, in the following terms :

"*Resolved*, That a select committee, of five members,

be appointed to inquire into the expediency of establishing a *Bureau of Statistics and Commerce*, in connection with the Treasury Department."

The few but very pertinent remarks with which Colonel Pratt prefaced this resolution had their influence with members. The committee was voted, and the mover appointed chairman. On the 8th of March, he reported in favor of establishing the bureau, and accompanied his report with a bill providing for its organization, and prescribing its duties. The report was much admired, and received marked commendation, not only in the House, but in all parts of the country where men dwelt capable of thoroughly appreciating the great purpose which its author had in view.

Mr. Cobb, of Georgia, speaker of the House of Representatives in the thirty-first Congress (1849-51), pronounced it to be "one of the most valuable reports made to Congress during the session, and containing a great deal of valuable information, which had been collected and arranged by Mr. Pratt, with much labor, and which could be found nowhere else." The *New York Journal of Commerce* declared that the realization of the plan would save half a million of dollars per annum to the government; and the press of the whole country was warm in praise of the measure, and of the faithfulness and ability of the chairman, in setting it forth with so much precision and clearness.

Colonel Pratt saw, however, that, from the advanced stage of the session, it would be impossible to get this

bill through at that time — Congress being then in its fourth month. He, therefore, introduced the subjoined joint resolution, which was adopted :

“ *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Treasury be authorized to assign to those clerks in his departments, not otherwise employed, the duties of the Bureau of Statistics, agreeably to the report made by the committee on that subject.”

The report made by Colonel Pratt can be found in the second part of this volume, and will amply repay the reader's most careful attention. It not only shows the precise object had in view by the author, but also contains much matter of importance, set forth in the most lucid order. No one can read the report without agreeing with the late Colonel Skinner, so well known for his writings on subjects having a most intimate connection with statistical science, that the establishment of a *Bureau of Statistics* by the general government, on the basis laid down by Colonel Pratt, will make an epoch in the history of the country.

Every citizen in New York feels a just pride in the recollection of the fact, that the work thus pronounced by competent judges to be so important was accomplished by one of their own representatives. It is far from being the least of those acts by which New York, through the hands of her sons, has given evidence of her ability to add to the glory and the stability of the republic.

To every man of strong patriotic feeling, nothing can

be the source of more pleasure than the progress of his country to wide-spread dominion ; and, if he be at the same time anxious — and what good man is not ? — that this extension of dominion should be also the extension of civilization, of religion, of education, and, what is the consequence of all these, of liberty regulated by law, he will, if an American, have ample cause to rejoice in the career of his country.

Colonel Pratt, as his associates well know, is foremost among those who believe emphatically in the “*mission of America*,” — that it is destined to establish on this continent a great nation, whereby the peace of the whole continent shall be preserved, just as it has been within the United States throughout the whole of their existence as a government. He is not one of those weak-minded, visionary personages, who see in every extension of American power over new regions something to alarm them for the safety of the country. On the contrary, he believes that our system is so excellent in itself, and so capable of being applied to almost every possible condition of things, that it is susceptible of infinite expansion. Among the earliest of his political recollections is the controversy respecting the purchase of the territory of Louisiana, the *chef-d’œuvre* of Mr. Jefferson’s administration, and, perhaps, all things considered, the greatest event of our age, if events are to be judged, as they should be judged, by their consequences. Though a mere youth, he rejoiced over the spread of his country’s rule ; as he did forty years later, when, in the

maturity of his intellect, he was among the leading spirits who reënnexed Texas to the United States.

In the giant strides which this country has made to universal, occidental empire, during the last seven years, few men have done more towards enabling her rapidly to realize her destiny than Zadok Pratt. And more : his course has been the result of calm deliberation, of a thorough examination of the subject. Study and reflection have confirmed his early impulses. Instinct and knowledge have joined hands. All the prophecies of evil from the purchase of Louisiana had turned out to be the vaticinations of false prophets who knew not what they said ; and it was but a fair inference that the whig prophets of 1844 would not prove to have been more wise than their predecessors of 1804.

Colonel Pratt presented a report to the House on this subject, — or, rather, on the relative condition of those two important sections of the Union, the North and the South, — for which the reader is referred to the second part of this volume.

“Rarely indeed, very rarely,” it has been well remarked, “are the relative positions of the two great sections of the Union — the slave-holding and non-slave-holding states — considered with the impartial spirit which characterizes the report alluded to. A perusal of the document would furnish strong corroboration of the assertion of the report itself, that the committee had no sectional feelings to gratify, no party objects to promote, no personal interests to advance

when engaged, in a proper spirit, in ‘calculating the value of the Union.’ ”

Colonel Pratt took an active part in the warm contest of 1844, when the Texan question was the principal point at issue between parties, and when the battle was fought on more even terms than had marked the controversy in 1840.

January 14, 1845, Mr. Pratt submitted the following important resolution, which was adopted, namely :

“ *Resolved*, That the Secretary of State be directed to communicate to this House such information as he may possess, or be able to procure, of the whole amount of the debt of Texas ; the amount for which bonds or scrip have been issued, and the present market value of such scrip or bonds in Texas, in the United States, and in Europe ; the amount in value of the exports from and the imports into Texas for the years 1843 and 1844 ; with the amount of revenue accruing and collected for the same years, with the expenditures for the same time. Also, the present population of Texas, distinguishing in number between free and slaves ; also, the quantity, in acres, of land, which it is supposed is covered by valid grants from the present and former government of that country ; and the estimated quantity, in acres, of good and arable land, suitable for cultivation, which remains ungranted within the undisputed and acknowledged limits of Texas, as the same existed prior to the year 1834.”

Whoever shall examine the records of the twenty-

eightth Congress will find Colonel Pratt's name often occurring in connection with subjects demanding the most constant and searching attention. He was not prevented from giving his aid to any undertaking because of its being new or startling in its character. The more grand or extensive the proposition was, the more likely was he to investigate its practical bearings. Hence he was one of the first favorably to receive the great project of Mr. Whitney, to construct a railroad from Lake Michigan to the Pacific Ocean. Looking upon it as an undertaking of the first consequence to the country, and far from being appalled by its magnitude, he was anxious that it should be coolly and fully considered by the national legislature.

On the 28th of January, 1845, he presented Mr. Whitney's memorial to the House of Representatives. He spoke with great earnestness on the occasion, observing that "the subject was one of the most important character, alike magnificent and useful, and well worthy the attention of the American people. Now," said he, "that the Oregon question is under discussion in Congress, and throughout the country,—now is emphatically the time for most seriously considering all the bearings of an important project like this. For the most extended commercial purposes, for the convenience and advantage of the whole American people, and last, but not least, for the purpose of securing American interests in the vast regions of Oregon, and promoting the capacities of our common country for warlike

defence, as well as for all the advantages of peaceful intercourse between the people dwelling on the shores of the Atlantic and the Pacific, this project of facilitating intercourse by railway and steam-power is one of the noblest to which the attention of our fellow-citizens, and the energies of our government, could now be directed. Such a vast line of communication, once completed, would prove an invaluable auxiliary in cementing the interests of our country, and of widely extending the blessings of our free institutions; and would greatly strengthen the friendly bonds which link together these states in one grand political confederacy. In addition to all this, from the facilities which such a line of intercourse would afford, in furnishing a direct westerly passage between Europe and China, it would accomplish what Columbus and other navigators long sought to obtain. In addition to all the foregoing considerations," he repeated, "this Atlantic and Pacific railroad, if managed with proper liberality, would soon become the highway of nations." In conclusion, he again asked for the whole subject the earnest consideration of the House, and of the people at large, especially as the project contemplated the settlement of the country along the route, as the work on the road advanced toward the Pacific Ocean.

Had the views which Colonel Pratt then sought to impress upon the House been responded to by the government and the nation, a large part of the great

railroad would ere this have been constructed, and the power of the nation largely increased.

In February, 1845, Colonel Pratt laid before the House a report in favor of taking preliminary measures for entering into commercial arrangements with the empire of Japan, and the kingdom of Corea. The report gave all the accessible statistics of these two great nations, and pointed out the advantages which would result from an intimate intercourse with them. The successful issue of the mission to China showed that an attempt to extend intercourse in that quarter of the globe might be safely undertaken.

In April, 1844, Colonel Pratt made an attempt to accomplish an important reform in the Patent Office. The fund which had accumulated there amounted to upwards of one hundred thousand dollars, and was increasing at the rate of ten thousand one hundred dollars per annum. He proposed to engrave and publish all the important inventions patented, — numbering thirteen thousand five hundred and twenty-three, — and to distribute the engravings, at the expense of the office, throughout the United States, every town in the country to be supplied, so that all persons may know what inventions have been patented, and have, at hand, for reference, a compend of all the models and drafts of machinery connected therewith. He also proposed that a sufficient sum should be appropriated out of the patent fund to purchase a library on mechanical subjects, for the use of citizens interested wishing to refer to them, under

regulations preventing misapplication and abuse. This attempt to make the Patent Office more useful than it had been, and to extend its benefits over the whole country, was one of the most commendable undertakings in which a man desirous of the good of his country could engage. It was highly favored by the leading presses of the country, and deserved the success which it was not fated to receive. Those only who know how much misery is caused by ignorance of the history of inventions can properly appreciate the excellence of the proposed reform. Many a man passes years in perfecting some machine, under the mistaken notion that it is new, and only finds out his error when it is too late for such knowledge to be useful to him. Had Colonel Pratt's proposition been accepted, the means of quickly ascertaining the exact character of all the inventions that have been patented in the United States would have been placed within the easy reach of every one.

Another measure of this character, which he proposed, met with no better success. It was that a monthly distribution of twenty thousand copies of the *Journal of the Franklin Institute* should be made among the mechanics of the country. This would have been, in some degree, a substitute for the measure just mentioned, as the *Journal* contains a list of all the patents issued. These, and other similar movements, failed, for the want of time.

In January, 1845, Colonel Pratt introduced a resolution, preceded by a report, on the preservation of flags

and similar articles taken in battle. This report shows that, previous to the war of 1812, very little care was taken of the evidences of our military successes by the government, though a resolution directed to their preservation had been passed by the Continental Congress, in 1778. The report says:.

“The small number of the Revolutionary trophies in possession of the executive department should cause Congress to take immediate measures for the preservation of those which remain. The capture of Lord Cornwallis alone furnished twenty-four standards and colors. Perhaps as many more were taken with General Burgoyne. Where are they now? Either mouldered into dust, or rotting in some obscure place, at this time unknown. The committee believe that any custom which has the sanction of all nations must have its origin in some deep feeling of the human heart; and they think that even a partial glance at the history of any people will show that the custom of displaying their trophies of victory has its origin and preservation in the wonderful influence which symbols are known to exercise over the fancy and heart of every beholder.”

From the Secretary of War the committee learned that “of the standards and colors taken by the army of the United States, during the war of the Revolution, six remained in his office; others, it is understood, were deposited in Philadelphia, while Congress sat in that city. Whether they were, or were not, brought to this place with the public offices, cannot be ascertained.”

The account from the Secretary of the Navy was even worse than this, — his department possessing not a single memorial, in the shape of a flag, of either of the war of the Revolution, of the *quasi* war with France, or of the chivalrous contests with the Barbary powers ! Surely, the annals of the world might be defied to furnish any parallel to such indifference to what, in all ages, have been considered objects of the first care. The American people have been accused of overrating, not only their own military exploits, but also the worth of military glory ; but this fact would seem to betoken in their minds something very like a philosophical contempt for everything connected with the art of war. It was to prevent such losses of military trophies that Colonel Pratt, in the name of the committee, presented a resolution for the collection and safe-keeping of all national trophies.*

In March, 1845, Colonel Pratt drew up a careful

* The following is the joint resolution which was passed : “ *Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all the foreign flags, and other warlike trophies, in possession of the United States, which have been taken in battle, and such American flags now in possession of the government as have been used in memorable battles, or on other important occasions, either by the army or navy of the United States, or by the troops in service of any of the States of the Union, together with such other flags and trophies of similar character as may come into possession of the government, shall be collected and arranged, under the direction of the President of the United States, with the view of having them all safely deposited in a suitable apartment, to be prepared and reserved for that purpose, in any new edifice which may hereafter be erected for the use of the War and Navy Departments of the United States.*”

report relative to the number of persons employed at the seat of government, in the various public offices ; the salaries which they received, the states to which they belonged, &c. The object was to afford correct information on a subject concerning which very erroneous impressions prevailed. The report answered fully the object for which it was undertaken. At an earlier day, he had made a report on the expenditures in the District of Columbia, from which it appears that the amount of public money thus disposed of exceeded ten millions of dollars. He was also very active in regard to a variety of matters connected with the district, and especially with the city of Washington.

His labors in behalf of the erection of a National Monument to Washington were of the most assiduous character, and greatly promoted the object had in view. He received for these labors a public and formal vote of thanks from the National Monument Society.

Being aware that a greater degree of accountability, on the part of public officers, would tend to the benefit of all parties, Colonel Pratt, in May, 1844, moved a joint resolution, requiring that an inventory of all public property* should be taken every two years, to be returned by every officer in the employ of government. A more useful measure than this, it would be difficult to imagine ; as it would tend to render officers more careful, and to place before the members of the national legislature an exact picture of the state and character of the public property. He introduced, too, a

joint resolution providing for periodical renewals, and greater security of the bonds of public officers.

On the 7th of June, he moved a joint resolution providing for the preparation and distribution of the national medals to colleges, academies, and state libraries.* He moved for a bill providing that the income from the Smithsonian bequest should be expended in promoting improvements in agriculture, manufactures and commerce, for awakening attention to the natural sciences, and to the improvement of the common school systems of the several states.

Had some such disposition been made of it, the design of the liberal testator would unquestionably have been carried out; for in no other way would the promotion of knowledge among men have been so surely secured.

** Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United State: of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States be and he hereby is authorized to have prepared, from time to time, of bronze or copper, at the mint of the United States, in Philadelphia, copies of any or all the medals that may have been prepared, or authorized to be prepared, by laws or resolutions of Congress, to distinguished officers and individuals of the United States, during and since the Revolution, to be distributed under his orders, as follows, namely: A full series or set of all such medals to the library of Congress, to each of the executive departments of the general government, to the national library at West Point, to the executive of each state, to be deposited and kept with its public archives or library, and to each university or chartered college for conferring degrees in the arts and sciences in any of the States: he is also authorized to cause to be kept in the Department of State additional copies of all such medals, for the purpose of distribution and exchange with foreign governments for medals of like character, of distinguished individuals, and incidents of the present or former periods. *Provided further*, that the series shall embrace medals of all the Presidents of the United States.*

On the 20th of February, 1845, Colonel Pratt, as chairman of the *Committee on Public Buildings*, proposed to appropriate the sum of eighty thousand dollars for erecting fire-proof edifices for the use of the Departments of Navy and War, twenty thousand dollars for a south wing to the Treasury buildings, and forty thousand dollars for the west wing to the Patent Office. He spoke very forcibly of the true economy involved in such expenditures. He showed that government was at that time renting ninety-four rooms, at an annual rent of six thousand dollars, which were not fire-proof, and were exceedingly unsafe. He thought that government should build, not hire.

Three public buildings, namely, the Post-office, the Patent Office and the Treasury, had been burned down within twelve years. There was not a fire-proof room in the building of any one of the three Departments of State, War and Navy, nor in any of the bureaus connected with them. It was proposed to build an edifice, with one hundred and sixty rooms, connecting, ultimately, the War and Navy buildings, with a front of about six hundred feet, and two hundred feet in each wing; the whole, when completed, to contain two hundred and sixty-four rooms, there being, at that moment, one hundred and eighty-five rooms wanted for the public service. No prudent business man would, for a moment, be without the fire-proof buildings necessary to protect so much valuable property; and he felt bound to say that enlightened legislators would not deny them to govern-

ment. The good sense of the members would cause them to see the necessity, and to provide the remedy. The treasury was full, and the money could not be better laid out.*

A previous report had been made on this subject by Colonel Pratt, in March, 1844; and other reports thereon had been made in the interval. On each occasion, he had laid before the House many facts showing the necessity which existed for the performance of the work he was so earnest in recommending. He caused

** Letter from the Hon. J. K. Paulding, former Secretary of the Navy, to Colonel Zadoek Pratt, dated*

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 9, 1845.

SIR:—I yesterday received, under cover of your frank, a number of the *Washington Globe*, containing an article on the subject of the condition of the War and Navy Departments, and presume I am indebted for it to your kind attentions. I have not been an inattentive observer of your highly useful and patriotic labors in this and other matters, which, though they don't make so much noise, are not the less important. I can bear testimony to the condition of the Navy Department while I occupied it. It was totally inadequate to the purposes for which it was originally erected. There was neither safety for the public archives, nor accommodations for the public servants. Single rooms were occupied by three or four clerks; there was no room for placing the public documents in such order as that they could be readily found;—an hour, sometimes days, were passed in searching for a paper, simply because it was not and could not be placed where it ought to be. No one can conceive, except from actual experience, the delays, inconvenience and confusion, resulting to the transaction of the public business, from these causes. I sincerely hope that, by the steady, sober, matter-of-fact course you are pursuing, you will, if not this session, at least during the next, succeed in the full attainment of your important object.

With great regard and consideration, I am, sir,

Your friend and servant,

J. K. PAULDING.

Hon. Z. PRATT, &c. &c., Washington.

plans, drawings and estimates, to be prepared, of those buildings, which the public interest, rightly understood, imperatively required to be erected. He was but partially successful, but still it will be found that he did not labor in vain ; for he demonstrated the necessity that exists for the adoption of a very different system from that which has so long prevailed. Time will show the entire correctness of his judgment, and government will, sooner or later, carry out the plans which he originated.

In connection with this debate, it is due to the reader to relate an anecdote which tends to illustrate with what tact and grace Colonel Pratt was ever prepared to meet an antagonist.

While this subject was under discussion, Colonel Pratt perceived that his bill could not be reached before the close of the session ; and he therefore moved an amendment to the civil and diplomatic bill, appropriating eighty thousand dollars to commence the buildings of the War and Navy Departments. Mr. Dromgoole, of Virginia, famed for his movements in matters of order, objected, not because he was unfavorable to the object of the mover, for he was rather inclined to favor it, but because it was *not in order* ; no plan or estimates were before the House, and it certainly was not in order to propose this amendment under such circumstances.

Colonel Pratt, with his usual quickness, stepped to the speaker's desk, and soon returned with the report, and the plan of the buildings which he had submitted with the other report, and, with admirable grace and good-

natured meaning, held them up to the gaze of Mr. Dromgoole, and before the House. It was the work of a moment, but the effect was quite exciting. He held the papers in one hand, and, with the other, schoolmaster-like, pointed out the lines of a lesson to Dromgoole which he had not expected so soon to learn. The members were convulsed with laughter at seeing Dromgoole matched for once, and the amendment was immediately adopted.

In June, 1844, he introduced into the House of Representatives a bill authorizing a system of banking in the District of Columbia. This bill contains substantially the same provisions that constitute the well-known banking system of New York, which has been found to work so well.

On few subjects of a secondary character has there been so much misrepresentation as on that of the expenditures for furnishing the presidential mansion. Those who recollect the canvass of 1840 well know how the *gold spoons** that Mr. Van Buren was said to have purchased were made the subject of accusation against him. One might have been excused for believing that a gentleman of remarkably plain and simple habits was living in a style of Median splendor, so strong were the repre-

* These spoons were purchased at an early period of our government by Mr. Monroe, in France. They were subsequently taken of him to be used at the White House. They were heavily gilded, but *not* made of solid gold, as many supposed. So much for the golden spoons of Mr. Van Buren, and the truthfulness of reckless politicians.

sentations, or, rather, the misrepresentations, that were current that year on the subject. Unquestionably, the votes of some of the closely contested states were that year lost to the democratic candidate, because of the widespread belief that he was a sort of luxurious spendthrift, who had departed from the simple habits of the early presidents. Yet, during the period of half a century, not much above two hundred thousand dollars had been expended on the furniture, decorations, etc., of a mansion represented as having been the scene of such splendid living. In 1845, some of the furniture was as ancient as the administration of Washington, and some of the carpets were patched.

As there is an interesting anecdote of Colonel Pratt, in connection with his official duties as *chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings*, it will not be inappropriate to relate it in this place.

As chairman of the committee, he asked to have the usual appropriation of twenty thousand dollars for re-furnishing the House before the inauguration of President Polk, and he reported a bill for that purpose. Action on the subject was repeatedly delayed, notwithstanding he frequently called attention to it. As the day of inauguration was rapidly approaching, Colonel Pratt, on his personal responsibility, ordered the old and ragged curtains, that hung before the windows of the reception room, to be removed, and new ones, of the best American manufacture, to be substituted, worthy of the place and occasion. The work was done, and the members began to

wonder at changes that they had not authorized. This excited the indignation of Mr. Hammatt, of Mississippi, who, in the House, charged Colonel Pratt with want of propriety and want of patriotism, by incurring unauthorized and extravagant expenditures for useless decorations in the reception room.

To judge of the scene which followed, the reader must translate himself, for a few moments, to the galleries of the House of Representatives, and observe an unusual attendance of members in their seats, and all turning their eyes towards the seat of Colonel Pratt, whose name had just been announced, as entitled to the floor by the speaker. All manifested a lively interest in his position; and, knowing his skill at repartee, they were bending forward in the attitude of the most earnest expectation, to watch his significant manner, as well as catch the words of his reply. Added to this, the colonel was a favorite, and his antagonist was generally unpopular, and, as many believed, not entitled to much consideration, either for what he had been, or for what he was. The venerable sage of Quincy had put aside his pen, and the clerks and reporters had for once raised their heads, to note the cause of so much and so sudden stillness.

The colonel, with his usual self-possession, arose with a grace and dignity that would have done honor to a Chatham, a Henry, or a Wirt, and, making to the speaker one of his stately bows, and casting a look of playful sarcasm, and suppressed indignation, at the gentleman of Mississippi, he turned deliberately in his place,

took a survey of the members, and of the visitors in the gallery, until his eye again rested upon that of the speaker, when his strong voice was first heard; and the following is the substance of his speech :

“Mr. Speaker : The gentleman from Mississippi has given us a speech on patriotism. He has led us to *infer* that he knows what it is, and has intimated that I am yet a subject to be taught its first principles. Perhaps so. It has been wisely said, that some men are made to *say* things, and others to *do* them; some *passionately* to *exclaim*, others to *feel*; some boldly to assert the value of integrity, others to be honest in their practices. I am not placed here to compare the merits of *professors*, or to judge of motives, but to do faithfully my duty as a member of that government which is here convened as the agent of the people. I am not here to make speeches, but to do the business of the House. We want acts, not words. I have been accused, by the gentleman from Mississippi, of having exceeded my authority, by compelling the American Congress to incur a useless expense in adorning the reception room of the White House. It is not my practice to presume to teach others, who are their own masters; but I cannot avoid the conviction that the manifestation of so much apparent feeling in the matter of furnishing the house of our chief magistrate with a little furniture that is but decent, is no better than a deliberate trifling with our duties, a solemn mockery of what an American citizen should be.

“If gentlemen wish to make political capital, I beg

that they will be entreated to take some *raw material*, and work it for their deceptive purposes, without descending to misrepresent the rags of the White House, as costly and splendid fabrics. They have been used too much already for other things, and should be exempted from the politician's touch. Gentlemen were willing to vote nearly one hundred thousand dollars to pay for books for themselves,—and they give their negative to a proposition for the small sum of twenty thousand dollars to put their own house in order.

“It is well known to members that the present incumbent of the White House came there not by my vote ; but it was enough that I found him there. He was President of the United States ; and it was my duty, as chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings, to see that he was comfortably provided for, in a manner suited to the dignity of the nation.

“As to the president elect, I think he would not feel proud of his new friends, after the course they took yesterday, to bring down his accommodations to their standard of propriety. I am confident, from what I know of the man, that he would rather have seen the House furnished at his own expense, than to have seen the vote of yesterday.”

Turning now to the gentleman from Mississippi, and making a significant pause, he continued,—

“Mr. Speaker : As a representative of the people, I hold to the duty of strict accountability. I am always ready to be called to account for what I have proposed

or done. I prefer this course, as being the best and *only* proper course.

“It is true, Mr. Speaker, that I did request the upholsterer to take down the greasy, tattered curtains in the reception chamber, because I considered them a disgrace upon our national character ; giving to our foreign ministers and their *suites* opportunities for sneering at our want of national pride, taste, and decency. But the order was given, Mr. Speaker, not as chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings, as the gentleman of Mississippi would represent. No, sir ! but as an American citizen, anxious to see my country’s audience chamber in a condition that should not bring the blush to my cheek when mentioned, or when compared with those of the proudest courts of Europe. As an individual, I requested the contractor to provide the best adornments for the reception chamber which the country could produce of American manufacture, stating that, if Congress did not see fit to pay the bill, *I would !* (Great sensation.) All that I said then, I reassert now.”

Again turning to Mr. Hammett, he concluded, with a look that completely paralyzed his antagonist, and electrified the auditors of the House and galleries, —

“Mr. Speaker : The gentleman from Mississippi has *talked* of patriotism in himself, and of the *want* of it in others ; but, if he is able to bring forward an act of his own, exerted in behalf of his country, of a more disinterested character than the one of which he complains, I am sure that all will join me in believing that such an

unlooked for fact would constitute a subject for sincere congratulation.”

When Colonel Pratt sat down, the sensation became intense, and the member from Mississippi was glad to be relieved from the lash of the tanner. In order to understand fully the extent of feeling manifested in this particular case, the reader should bear in mind that the member from Mississippi was not distinguished for his public liberality, and was evidently confident of an easy victory.

It was a prevailing habit with Colonel Pratt to study with a view to find out in what way the most good could be done. This feature of his character was illustrated by the resolution, which he offered towards the close of his Congressional career, authorizing the Secretary of War to loan marquees and tents to State agricultural societies, when holding their fairs.

The course of Colonel Pratt in the twenty-eighth Congress gave great satisfaction to his constituents, who had watched his activity with great pride and interest. They saw that he was close and unremitting in his attention to public duties, and that his industry, integrity and ability, had caused their district to become a subject of interest throughout the nation. Among the most gratifying of the means used to express their sense of the conduct of their member, was the passage of the following resolution, by the Democratic convention of Greene county, on the 29th of August, 1844. The resolution, as will be seen, enumerates some of the most important

of his labors at Washington; but not all, as the very busy session continued several months after the resolve was passed. It may be here mentioned, that the whole number of elaborate and carefully prepared reports made by Colonel Pratt, in the Twenty-eighth Congress, was *nineteen*, embracing about one thousand pages in print, many of which are made up of valuable tables, and cost much research and labor. The vote of Greene county convention, just alluded to, is as follows :

“ *Resolved*, That our warmest thanks are due to the Hon. Zadock Pratt, our faithful representative, for his eminent public services and untiring devotion to the business of the present session of Congress; and especially in placing on record the fact that more than fourteen millions of freemen had instructed their representatives to vote for refunding to General Jackson the fine imposed upon him while fighting for his country at New Orleans; in establishing a Bureau of Statistics, which is of incalculable benefit to legislation, to government in all its departments, and to business men of the country; in causing a resolution to be passed, by which the inventions of our mechanics which are patented are to be lithographed, and furnished to each town, free of expense; for his admirable taste in the construction of public buildings, in the laying out and disposition of the public grounds, in the surpassingly beautiful monument to the memory of Washington; in the various and able reports from time to time submitted by him to that body; and

finally, in causing government, like individuals, to take and keep an inventory of the property of the nation.”

On leaving Congress, Colonel Pratt again addressed his constituents, giving an account of his proceedings as their representative. It will be seen that, though longer than the address which was issued in 1838, it is so only because he had taken part in the settlement and discussion of a greater number of important questions than in 1837-8. It is embraced, at length, in this volume, and the reader will be amply compensated for giving it a most attentive perusal.*

In a work like the present, it is not customary to copy much from the public press. It is supposed that a biography should be written independently of all such collaterals and aids. In some respects, this is a rule which appears to be dictated alike by good taste and a proper regard for scrupulous accuracy. In the present volume, however, we have deviated from this line of literary custom, and for reasons which we deem conclusive. It must be considered that political position depends much for its importance on popular appreciation, and popular author-

* In making extracts from this Address, the “National Intelligencer” (Washington) says :

“From a circular letter addressed to his constituents, at the close of the last session of Congress, by the Hon. Zadock Pratt, of New York, a copy of which has fallen into our hands, we make the subjoined extracts. We insert these extracts, not alone for the just conception which they furnish of the true representative character, but as a merited compliment to an honest and worthy member, who aimed to be useful rather than showy, and who (opposed though he was to us in political opinions and relations) has claimed to himself, in his address to his constituents, not an iota more than is justly his due.”

ity. To avail ourselves of these sources of influence, we shall make some quotations from the public press, and chiefly for the confirmation of views which we have so confidently expressed.

Of the many notices which we find of Colonel Pratt's public life, in the leading journals of the country, we can transfer to our pages but one or two.

The editor of the *Albany Argus*,* one of the ablest political journalists of the country, said :

“Colonel Pratt has devoted himself to the utility of legislation. He has given his attention to public objects designed to advance science, the arts, commercial intercourse, the dissemination of useful knowledge, and to facilitate the practical labors of the departments. Few men have accomplished as much, in these important respects, as he has done, in the course of four years of Congressional service ; and he has laid the foundation of good that will mature gradually hereafter, as views and suggestions truly enlightened, and worthy of a practical, republican people and government, shall be brought to the popular consideration, and the action of Congress.”

The *Troy Budget* remarked : “Colonel Pratt has represented the eleventh Congressional district of this state for two terms ; and we may safely say that but few, if any, who have been sent to the House of Representatives, since the period when he first took his seat there, have rendered more important services to the country, or watched with closer fidelity the interests of their imme-

* Edwin Croswell, Esq.

diate constituents, than he. He is distinguished for the possession of more than an ordinary share of plain, practical common sense, a trait much needed to make a safe and useful legislator. His address,* like his speeches upon the floor of Congress, is characteristic of the man. It makes no attempts at display, and is devoid of all rhetorical flourishes; but it stamps the writer as a man of vigorous mental powers, and as one who might be safely relied upon in any emergency."

"It may be affirmed," says the *Niagara Democrat*, Dec. 9, 1846, "that no member of Congress ever performed more labor, in four years, than did the New York leather-maker."

To copy more extracts would seem to imply the want of confidence in our own premises and conclusions. To have done less, would indicate the want of a species of influence highly estimated by the public. Public opinion is made, advanced and swayed, by the newspaper press. The newspaper may be made the instrument of evil, the dispenser of incitements to the lower passions, and the instigator of plots, treasons and falsehood; but these are the abuses incident to its nature, and belong equally to the purest agents of virtue, and to the holiest of causes.

We cannot refrain from introducing in this place another Congressional anecdote, as it illustrates the peculiar readiness of Colonel Pratt to respond either to sallies of wit, or to the attacks of reason.

* Address to his constituents, in second part of this volume.

Among the numerous reports which he made, as chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, was one relative to the removal of the unsightly building in which the statue of Washington was shut up, in lieu of which he proposed an iron railing.

The Hon. C. J. Ingersoll, of Philadelphia, then chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, thought the opportunity a good one for exhibiting his wit to the crowded galleries, at the expense of Colonel Pratt ; and he thus addressed the House, who were in committee :

“ Mr. Chairman : I beg leave to suggest to the honorable chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, that he had better embrace in his report the Indian lady next to the statue of Columbus, at the east portico of the capitol. The gentleman had better first provide for enclosing her.”

Now, as the scantiness of this aboriginal dame's apparel had just been commented on by the newspapers with some warmth, Mr. Ingersoll thought his joke a capital one, and the House and the galleries enjoyed it much.

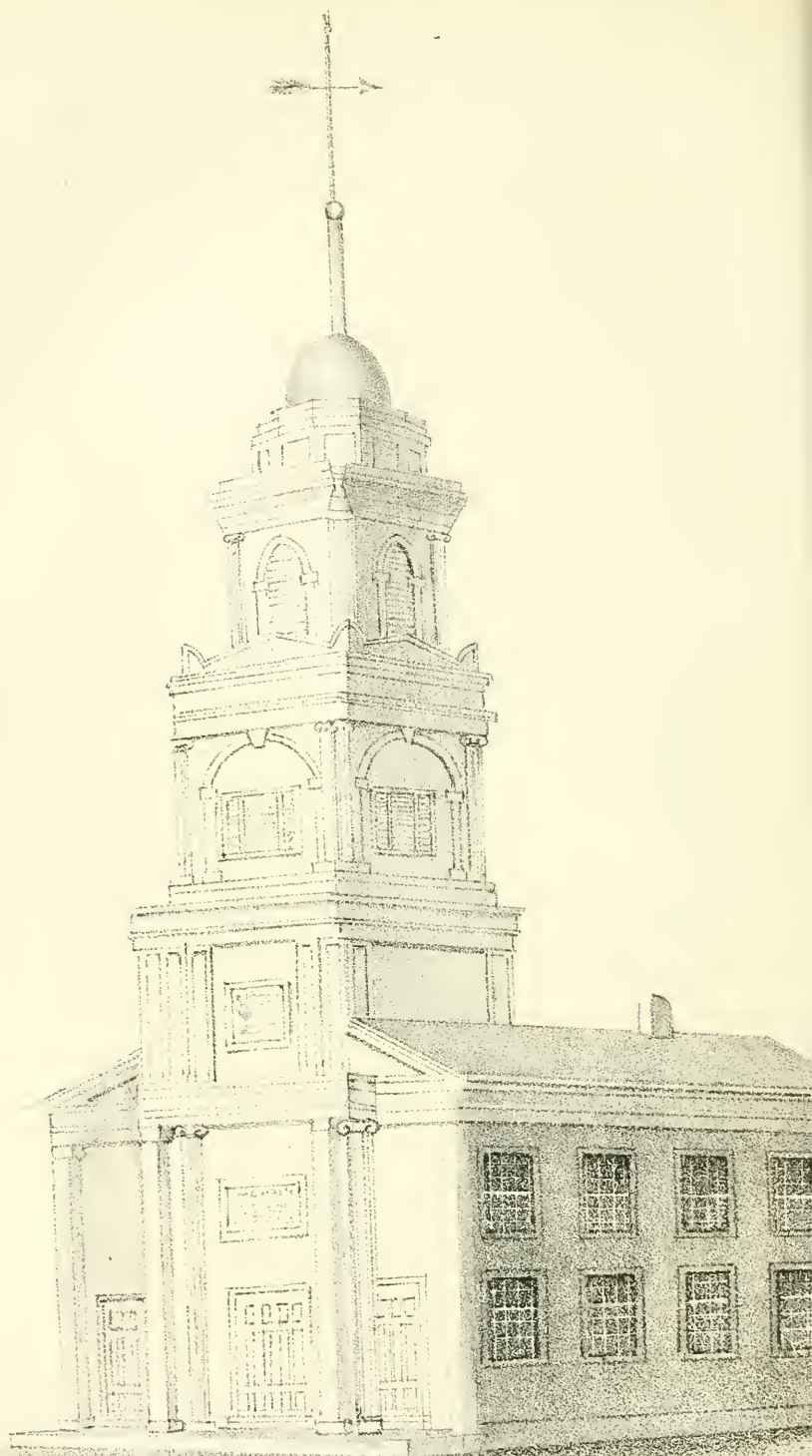
Colonel Pratt, however, saw that the joke was but half finished ; and, arising with great gravity, and with a deliberation worthy the most momentous subject, he said :

“ Mr. Chairman : In no one respect, sir, have I so uniformly insisted on having my way as in all necessary measures to secure the *fitness of things*. I may be in error ; but, in my opinion, that duty can with peculiar fitness be discharged by the honorable chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, *himself* ; for, if report

speaks truly, that gentleman has had a great deal of practice in 'embracing' and 'enclosing' the fair sex."

The effect of this severe retort was instantaneous. The whole House was convulsed with laughter, in which the visitors in the galleries joined. It was a shot in the very centre of the target, and for some time it was impossible to restore order. No one laughed more heartily than Mr. Ingersoll himself; and, leaving his place, he went to his antagonist, and exclaimed, with much good-nature, "Pratt, I never had so dead a shot in all my life. After that, I'll never attack you again."

At the close of the session, he gave a grand entertainment to the members of Congress, and then bade farewell to public life. He had responded to the call of his fellow-citizens to serve them, and he now surrendered a trust which he had most faithfully discharged. He was desired to continue; but he declined the honor, as incompatible with his own interests, and with the claims of others. Few men have ever left Congress with a fairer fame, or a purer conscience.



REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH.

Rebuilt 1835.

CHAPTER XII.

Letter respecting the tariff. — Letter respecting railroad from Lake Michigan to the Pacific. — Public spirit. — Colonel Pratt a candidate for governor. — Declines the honor. — Political parties in New York. — Conclusion. — Review of the life of Colonel Pratt as a mechanic, as a business man, as a banker, as a man — as a writer and speaker, as a statistician, as a legislator. — Anecdotes.

THE tariff question was warmly discussed in Congress during the year 1846, which led to the adoption of the system now in force, that has been found to work so well, both in peace and in war, furnishing an ample revenue, and not pressing too hard on any of the interests of the country. While the House of Representatives was engaged in the discussion, Colonel Pratt visited Washington, and was addressed by several gentlemen, of the Committee of Ways and Means, who desired to know his opinions on the policy of continuing the then high rates of duty on hides and leather, and on articles into the manufacture of which leather entered, together with any facts and suggestions which he might think proper to offer.

Colonel Pratt has often been known to say, that he never looked into the almanac to ascertain the character of the weather, nor into tariff laws to learn how to regulate his business. His rules were, he said, to buy as

cheap as he could, to manufacture as cheaply and as quickly as possible, and to forward his goods promptly to the market, selling them for the highest prices he could get, and always keeping his customers good-natured. In this way, he said, he had carried on business very satisfactorily for twenty years, each year affording him a fair profit; and with that he was content. The opinion of such a man on the question then under consideration would have much weight, and the gentlemen of the committee acted wisely in opening the correspondence with him which may be found in another part of this volume.

In respect to his letter, it may be asserted, with much truth, that it would be difficult to find better sense, expressed in better language, in anything which has been published, during the whole controversy on the relative merits of protection and free trade.

Had the views which he, through life, adopted for himself, been entertained by others in business matters, how different would have been their fortunes! It is clearly obvious that men should not depend upon the action of government to regulate their business; for, if government can raise them, through the favor it shall show to a certain course of policy, to the zenith of prosperity, a change in that policy must depress them to the very nadir of ruin. The *varium et mutabile* of the poet is but too applicable to governmental action; and that, too, without those who hold the reins of government being the subjects of censure. The ship of state, even in countries that are far less free than our own, must be

directed in accordance with the popular breeze. The very prosperity that follows from government favors raises up enemies; and that which was to have been the source of permanent wealth often is made the means of destruction. Our manufacturers but too closely resemble those court favorites, who used occasionally to appear when royalty was a *vital* thing, and whose destruction was the necessary consequence of their prosperity. There is, indeed, nothing like the sun of prosperity for developing poisonous qualities in soils that apparently teem with flowers.

The deep interest which Colonel Pratt felt in the construction of a railroad from Lake Michigan to the Pacific led him to address the people of the United States on the subject. The address was published in the *National Intelligencer*, Washington, Aug. 28, 1847.*

No one had a better right than Colonel Pratt to speak to his fellow-citizens on this subject. Not only had he mastered all the details connected with it, but he saw clearly what would be the result of the undertaking, if it were carried out to completion. He had, too, been the first man to bring the subject before the national legislature. The address is exceedingly interesting and instructive. It was extensively published, and attracted much attention both here and in Europe.†

* See second part of this volume.

† In February, 1847, Colonel Pratt was invited to take stock in the *Hudson River Railroad Company*. The *Journal of Commerce* publishes his reply, which authorized a subscription of ten thousand dollars. He closes in his brief,

Although Colonel Pratt has been frequently mentioned by the public prints in the State of New York, as a candidate for the first office within the gift of the Empire State,—and though he has many ardent friends who have long desired to place him in nomination,—still, it is not our purpose here to discuss the question of his fitness for that high station, or to give opinions in regard to the probabilities of success, should the democrats decide upon such a ticket. To predict, or to speculate, as to what he would be as governor of a state, after so many practical trials of skill and judgment to which he has been subjected, would be equivalent to a rejection of the teachings of experience. To have been well tried, and at no time found wanting, are facts which the people can understand, and which they will ever appreciate.

We can give, in respect to this subject, therefore, only a brief statement, which may serve as completing the record already written.

At a Democratic Convention, held at Cairo, in Greene county, on the 26th February, 1848, the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

“ *Resolved*, That in view of his proved integrity and

characteristic manner, by saying, “ I am happy to see that you are up and doing. As no dead man does any good, we must do good while we live.”

On the occasion of the celebration of the opening of the New York and Erie Railroad to Binghamton, December 27, 1848, Colonel Pratt acted as one of the vice-presidents. Being called on for a sentiment, he gave—

“ *The Merchants of New York* : The builders of the New York and Erie Railroad ; by it they have opened new hemlock forests to the tanner, who in return will furnish them with *soles* for the rest of their days ; but may their *souls* have no rest until the road shall have been extended to the Pacific.”

sound judgment, of his tried devotion to the best interests of the masses of the people and his familiarity with their wants, and especially in view of his popularity with the mechanics and working-men of the state, we take pleasure and pride in expressing our preference for the Hon. Zadock Pratt as our next candidate for governor, subject to the decision of the regular democratic state convention."

It will be recollected, by all persons who are familiar with the politics of New York, that the democratic party in that state had been defeated there, in 1846 and 1848, in consequence of intestine quarrels. It is not within our province to go into an examination of the causes of these, or to inquire which branch of the democratic party was deserving of censure. It is enough for us to know the consequences of those quarrels. In 1846 they led to the defeat of Governor Wright, and to the state's passing into the hands of the whigs. In 1848 it caused, not only the local defeat of the democracy, but their defeat in the nation, the presidency passing into whig hands.

It was the desire of all men who wished well to the cause of sound principles that these differences should be removed, and the united democracy once more show its strength. Efforts to that end were made in 1849, but were not attended with results so complete as could have been desired. In 1850 a governor was to be chosen, with other state officers of the first class; and it was soon apparent that the candidate of the democracy would be supported by both sections of his party. Still the pros-

pect of success was involved in doubt. Many felt that it was a great object to have such a nomination made as would be likely to secure for its support something beyond what mere party could give it.

During the public discussion of candidates, no one was more frequently referred to than Colonel Pratt.* It was thought, by many, that he was almost the only man who had a sufficient popularity to master the opposition.

The Democratic State Convention met at Syracuse, on the 13th of September, 1850. The nominations were made in the afternoon, that of candidate for governor being first in order.

Just before the balloting was commenced, Mr. Tremaine, of Greene county, rose, and said :

“ There were members of the convention who proposed to cast their votes for a distinguished citizen of Greene county. He alluded to the Hon. Zadock Pratt, well known throughout the state, as a sterling democrat, a gentleman of high personal character, and of undoubted qualifications for the office.

“ As a friend of that gentleman, he desired to say that it was his wish not to have his name introduced into the canvass ; and to return thanks, on his behalf, to such of

* In alluding to this fact, a Washington correspondent of the New York Sun, September 5, 1846, says (in a description of public men), “ That tall, earnest, animated man, who is talking with James Buchanan, is Zadock Pratt : that Zadock Pratt who was so famous in Congress for unanswerable reports ; the Zadock Pratt who put the cheap postage ball in motion in 1836, and put the annexation question so strictly before his party, in 1843 and 1844, that they were forced to adopt the measure. The very man, in short, that so large a portion of the people of New York State would like to see governor.”

the convention as had intended to cast their votes for him.”

Colonel Pratt had maintained the strictest silence on the subject of the candidacy ; and, until Mr. Tremaine had spoken, his determination was not known to any member of the convention, except the gentleman who had been authorized to speak in his behalf.

Many members of the convention were disappointed, on hearing the remarks of Mr. Tremaine ; but the hour of action had arrived, and the balloting immediately commenced. The choice of the convention fell on the Hon. HORATIO SEYMOUR, a gentleman of much experience in public life, of great talents, of sound political principles ; in short, one who deserved to be elevated to the place for which he was put in nomination. He was nominated by a vote of more than two to one, — receiving eighty-nine votes, to thirty-seven cast for other gentlemen.

At the election in November, the contest proved to be so close, that it was for a time doubtful whether the democratic or the whig ticket had prevailed. The choice was first announced to be in favor of Seymour ; but the official returns showed that Washington Hunt, the whig candidate, was elected by a very small plurality, thus placing the state administration again into the hands of the whig party for another term.

Having set forth the fundamental principles of biography based upon a philosophical analysis of character, and having given the principal facts and events con-

nected with the subject of our notice, nothing now remains to be accomplished, but to review the details as illustrating the several highly responsible positions in which he has so eminently and so honorably sustained himself. In other words, we propose simply a practical conclusion.

As a mechanic, Mr. Pratt has proved himself to be an example entitled to the highest consideration. Industrious, skilful, faithful, and prompt in the fulfilment of all his engagements, he not only labored for his own profit, but for the good of others. He did not ask success at the expense of his neighbors or his patrons, but amply earned it by giving the full value for the prices which he received. It has ever been his pride to excel as a mechanic,—to be master of his business; well knowing that method in its arrangement, and thoroughness in its execution, were indispensable conditions to successful results.

His advice to apprentices, in his address before the NEW YORK INSTITUTE, forcibly indicates not only the plain course of conduct which he has himself pursued, but such as he would urge upon others.

“Allow me to say to apprentices, guardians, or men employed in any and in all situations, make yourselves useful; yes, make your *time*, your *talents*, so necessary, that your employer cannot do without you; and then will come a *price* equal to your earnings, or a partnership worth your having.

“It belongs to you who would rise in the world to

mind your business; and remember, that a man is known by his works as well as by the company he keeps; and, I will add, I have never known a person regret being honest, frugal, industrious and prompt, a lover of order, and a respecer of the *Sabbath*. Young men are not apt to be conscious of what they are capable of doing. They are too often daunted by difficulties; they see too many lions in the path. They do not task their faculties, nor improve as they ought the gifts that God has bestowed. Some are too diffident to succeed well in a world of strife; others are too proud to ask advice, or to follow it when honestly given. More young men are ruined by false pride than by anything else, except laziness. Therefore, my young friends, be willing to be advised by those who have experience. Consult the wise and good, and profit by their examples. If you would succeed in life, let your motto be not only to look ahead, but to go ahead. Set your mark high, and strive to reach it. You can succeed, if you will. Remember, my young friends, the almost omnipotent power of perseverance,—the power of industry and of labor. Remember, you who are just beginning the world, that fourteen or sixteen hours a day are sure to foot a good account, and seldom will need an endorser.

“You must remember, also, that ‘Order is heaven’s first law;’ and that the Scripture tells us to ‘Let everything be done decently and in order.’ The man of method is generally a successful man. The neglect

of this great principle has ruined its tens of thousands. An excellent rule is, '*Let nothing be neglected this day.*'"

Again, in his "*Address before the Franklin Library Association,*" he says, "I look upon INTELLIGENCE, my friends, as the main pillar in the character of the mechanic; and the superior advantages which the working-man enjoys in our country, the freedom from restraint, and the general intelligence which everywhere prevail, constitute the great difference between the working-men of the old and of the new world, and furnish an additional reason why every one should act well his part."

That he ever manifested enlarged views of the true position of the mechanic, may be inferred from his method of remark on Dr. Webster's definition of the word mechanic.

In his "*Address before the Catskill Mechanic's Society,*" he thus improves upon the definition of the great lexicographer:

"Noah Webster, the great American dictionary and school-book maker, says: 'A mechanic is a person whose occupation is to construct machines or goods, wares, instruments, furniture and the like.'

"I should define a mechanic as one who takes certain substances and materials in certain states, and works them into other combinations and conditions, by which they are rendered of higher use and greater value.

"Some writers on political economy have claimed that the producing class alone add to the national wealth.

But what real wealth would there be in *wheat*, if there were no mechanic in the mill to grind it, and no mechanic in the kitchen to knead and to bake it into bread?"

It is interesting to observe with what lively interest and proud reflections he contemplates the mechanic's place in the diversified callings of the world.

"The dignity of mechanical pursuit is not, I think, generally understood. To me it seems to be everywhere undervalued.

"But I would ask, is not mechanical labor, in fact, one of the highest and noblest pursuits of man? What pursuit, let me ask, has produced such great results? We hear of the old philosophers and astronomers; but did any of them find out how to make glass, or construct a watch, or a water-wheel? No. Did any of them discover the art of printing? Certainly not; they were buried so deep in their philosophy that their principal labors consisted in casting nativities, or searching for the philosopher's stone; while, to practical men, to mechanics, the world owes these and other great discoveries.

"We read of Sir Isaac Newton, who developed the system of the universe, and counted some three millions of fixed stars through his telescope. But who made the telescope? who contrived the wonderful instrument which revealed to him these glories? A MECHANIC! Who, at a late day, enabled another great astronomer, Herschel, to penetrate still further into the mysteries of

the stars? Why it was a practical mechanic, as well as philosopher!

“A poor barber of Bolton, in England, about a hundred years ago, conceived a plan of shortening the labor of spinning cotton,—of making thread by machinery, which, from the earliest times, had been done by hand,—and, with the aid of a watch-maker of a neighboring village, he constructed the spinning-jenny, which has added millions to the wealth of England, and multiplied the comforts of the civilized world. The poor title of “Knight” was all the reward which the haughty aristocracy of England could concede to the mechanic Arkwright! But his name will live longer than the proudest of theirs, — as long as that of England herself.

“To the skill of the mechanic the world owes the invention of the cotton-gin, which has tripled the value of the acres of the Southern States, and made fortunes by hundreds of millions to the planters and manufacturers of cotton. And yet I have looked in vain, throughout the cities of the south, for a monument to Whitney. Though a mechanic, he will outlive the generations to whom he opened the way to wealth, because he put his mark upon the age in which he lived, and created a monument that can never be destroyed. And the great mechanic of New York,—who would not be proud of the name of mechanic, borne by such a man as Fulton!”

With what undisguised sincerity is the poor barber of Bolton remembered, the memory of Whitney rescued from neglect, and the name of Fulton held up for grate-

ful contemplation ! He does not speak of them as an orator would, as surrounded by their ultimate glory ; but looks to their origin, to their vocation and to their obvious means of success. He claims their glory for the mechanic ; and, while an admiring world is grateful for the splendid results of their discoveries, he points to the mechanic as the legitimate inheritor of their acquisitions, and as the true successor and representative of their power and name.

There is no better test of a man's true character than the trial of his pride as he advances in the scale of honor, and from the mere position of labor rises to one of high distinction. As he rises, he will either elevate and dignify his profession and his associates, add character to his class, or falsely desert them to seek a place in other circles, to assume new pretensions, and to forget old ones. He either endeavors to improve the skill of his brother-mechanics by teaching them new processes of labor, or strives to forget that he has ever worked with his hands, or that he has been clothed with a laborer's apron. He is too apt to consider that eminence in one profession entitles him to peculiar distinction in all others ; and to bring upon himself the ridicule which severe observers deem just to all who attempt to accomplish what they do not understand, or what they have never practised.

It has been well remarked, that ridicule is the easiest kind of wit, and that contempt and arrogance are the readiest philosophy ; but it must be confessed that no

attempts at either, unless circumscribed within the probabilities of truth, ever reduce their objects to a rank below their real merits. The shafts of ridicule and of contempt dissolve in the potent light of truth, and fall powerless in their passage when aimed at her invincible votaries.

Men err in feeling, as well as in thought. There is a wise adjustment of sentiment, as well as a logical judgment. All men have vanity. They differ chiefly in their ability to conceal it. Franklin confessed its rule, and provided for its control. Diogenes could see it in the habiliments of Socrates, and Socrates in the rags of Diogenes. The Quaker finds it in the colors of fashion, and the draper in the Quaker's fastidiousness in the choice of a fabric, or in the *shade* of a color. Even Cicero exclaimed,

“ Let arms revere the robe, the warrior's laurel
Yield to the palm of eloquence ; ”

while Demosthenes better understood the power of modesty, and gratified his vanity by apologizing for his imperfections.*

But few men seem to be more alive to the wisdom of a just distinction between modest merit and ill-disguised assumption than the subject of this biography. He neither disowns the pride which elevates the pretensions of men, nor the vanity which is gratified by success and

* It is said that Demosthenes confessed he was pleased when even a fish-woman of Athens pointed him out.

advancement. He claims for pride the high motives which characterize worthy and ambitious men ; and for vanity that self-gratulation which is satiated only by great and useful ends.

This striking feature of his character is well illustrated in the opening of his "ADDRESS BEFORE THE CATSKILL MECHANIC'S SOCIETY," from which we have already quoted. Nothing can be more apt ; and it would be difficult to find in history a confession so open, so candid, and so free from thoughtless vanity, in one who had proved himself to be a thinker, a speaker, and an adviser of men. He waves no personal prerogative that inheres in merit ; he claims no extraneous compliment that belongs to others.

"I am sure you have not invited me to address you, on this occasion, with any expectation of hearing from me the silvery sounds of eloquence. Like you, I have been taught to use my hands, rather than my tongue. I am not ashamed at not being skilled in that which is not my business ; and if any professional man, who has spent his days in schools and colleges, undertakes to criticize me to-night, I have only to say to him, come to my tannery and do your best ; and then see if, while you laugh at my lecture, I might not have reason to laugh louder at your leather. If, gentlemen, you had given me an order for leather, you would, I trust, have expected the best quality, and you should not have been disappointed. But, as you have ordered an address, I know that you have done it not expecting much ; and so I have in this

also the consolation that you cannot be greatly disappointed."

In claiming for the mechanic an honorable rank in society, he does not leave his motives to be conjectured, or his meaning to be misconstrued.

"Bear in mind," says he, "that the mechanic should educate his head, his hand, and his heart. He will thus learn to distinguish good from evil; to know how to supply his wants and add to his comforts; and how to dispense blessings to all around him."*

As a business man, our subject has but few equals. The requisite mental powers for a superior business man are those of perception and reflection, combined with those sentiments and propensities which give beauty to motives and energy to action. To analyze business in all its near and remote relations, is to study men as to judgment, wants and wishes, and to study things as to nature, design and end. Business is a practical illustration of cause and effect; and whether we contemplate the narrow circle of the humble mechanic, in his neighborhood, or the more extended range of the merchant, whose ships whiten the waters of every ocean, the plain and simple aphorisms of experience are equally applicable, equally true, and equally requisite.

* Colonel Pratt was on board the steamship Princeton when the gun called the "Peace-maker" exploded, and caused so many deaths among the distinguished men of that time. He gave a practical illustration, on that sad occasion, of his capacity to be promptly useful. He was the first to recover from the terrific shock, and to proceed to take those measures most proper, under the heart-rending calamity.

As the business career of Col. Pratt must be regarded as remarkable for its system, consistency and successful results, a brief view of the principles which characterize his methods of thinking and acting cannot be considered by the reader as otherwise than useful. It was his habit to clothe his principles in language so simple that all could understand; and to reduce them to maxims, to be so frequently read and spoken, that all within the limits of his influence should be induced to practise them.* Among the rules which it may be said formed the business creed of his life, we find the following unpretending, though true and useful sayings. They may be found scattered through the pages of his journals or scrap-books, or posted in his workshops:

“Mind your business.”

“Do one thing at a time.”

“Remember that ‘order is heaven’s first law.’”

“The man of method is generally a successful man. The neglect of this great principle has ruined its tens of thousands.”

“Whatever your trade be, never be ashamed of it, or above it.”

“Never think people of your own class too mean for your associates, but rather court their acquaintance; the conversation of men of trade gives information and

* His selection of sentiments was always appropriate, and directly to the point. Thus, at a school celebration, he gave the following: “Learning is the rich man’s ornament, the poor man’s riches.”

brings trade ; — men first talk together, then deal together.”

“ Without diligence, application and perseverance, every trade must languish, and be unsuccessful.”

“ Trust nothing to speculation; and avoid all paper-money schemes, to deceive the public, and uphold a false credit.”

“ Be just, and fear not.”

A just conception of the nature of things is the basis of a business man's character. To him it is literally true that “ *knowledge is power.*” Knowledge is no more to the world, without practical application, than water is to the steam-engine before the application of fire. Steam is *water* in action; and it may be said that *business* is knowledge in action; and, although the negative quality of passive acquiescence, in this world of activity, may be looked upon by some as entitled to notice, still, we can hardly assign to it a place of much merit, or count it a cause of much efficiency.

The pre-requisites of a good business man are indicated by the simple maxims which we have given, and may be summed up in a single sentence: *Application, perseverance, order, frugality, justice, integrity, benevolence and courtesy, make up the combination necessary to success in business, and to happiness in society.*

It has been truly said that “ the highest panegyric that private virtue can receive is the praise of servants.” It has been estimated that Col. Pratt has paid wages to more than thirty thousand different men, to the amount

of several millions of dollars; and yet he has avoided all personal difficulties and law-suits.*

In order to have a just comprehension of the true business character of Col. Pratt, we have only to examine the several documents embraced in this volume, which furnish the facts and details of what he has accomplished as a mechanic, trader, banker, farmer, and legislator. In all these positions he has acted; and he has done what few have done, he has placed upon record, not only the history of his deeds, but has indicated complete methods of proceeding, so that all who have a desire to improve in systematizing their labors may derive some benefit from his experience.

Look at the accounts of his tanneries, and see with what order and efficiency every department is arranged. In the first place, an exact classification of labor is made, and a foreman is appointed to overlook each subdivision, and to control all the details, so that they may be reported to a general head, which superintends all. Then we find a system adopted which gives an exact account of the stock to be manufactured, the kind, the quantity, and the materials to be used,—the process, the time of the process, and of the ultimate finish.

Look through his extensive establishments, and you will find everywhere extraordinary neatness, order and industry. He did not adopt the old maxim, “*A place for*

* For a period of above thirty years he has been in co-partnership; and, during that time, though connected with more than twenty different partners, all accounts have been amicably adjusted.

everything, and everything in its place,” without practising it to the fullest extent. Follow him to the market of the metropolis of the Empire State, and you will find in his movements no omission, no indifference, no neglect as to small things, as they might be termed by some persons; but, on the contrary, the same observing eye is discovered noting every step, every circumstance, indeed, everything which is in any way connected with his interests, or his business.

His teams are chosen with the nicest judgment, both in respect to beauty and use; their capacities for strength measured, their loads weighed and adjusted with humanity, and their doings recorded with a precision that would do honor to a club of antiquarians. He then becomes an example as a merchant, and studies with rare ability the markets of his country. He seeks the precise knowledge which enables him to judge with safety where to sell, how to sell, and when to sell. When it is necessary to act, he is prepared to act, and always according to a system.*

If we observe him as a farmer, he is the same indomitable lover of method, insisting upon a knowledge of all the facts relating to agriculture; to the various modes of

* “We have been frequently amused,” says an editor, “at the quaint remarks of Hon. Zadock Pratt, ex-member of Congress (a man of strong common sense), who was originally a tanner by trade. A speculator was showing him a new method of tanning, by which he represented that great quantities of money could be made. Mr. Pratt told him he did not doubt it, but he was making money enough; that he (the speculator) had better find some one who was not doing so well. He was never allured by speculators to leave his legitimate business.”

management of the countless products of the earth, such as are useful and profitable ; to the raising and improving of stock ; to the economy of labor, enforcing upon the minds of all the acknowledged truth, that, to the tillers of the soil, more than to most other classes, of men, we are to look for private virtue, domestic peace, and a safe ambition.

Whether we regard him at home, within the limits of his own particular business, or trace his coöperation with his fellow-citizens, in his own town, county or nation, we find that strict observance of principles which he has ever deemed indispensably necessary to success. He adopted but few rules, but these he observed.* They were invariably applied, whether he was called to build a bridge, a church, a court-house or a capitol. In a thousand different ways he exemplified that line of encouragement, which we find in Virgil, as given by Dryden,

“ For they can conquer, who believe they can.”

* “ There is,” says Lord Chatham, “ one plain maxim to which I have invariably adhered, through life ; that, in every question in which my liberty or my property was concerned, I should consult and be governed by the dictates of common sense. I confess (he added) that I am apt to mistrust the refinements of learning, because I have seen the ablest and most learned men equally liable to deceive themselves and mislead others. The condition of human nature would be lamentable, indeed, if nothing less than the greatest learning and talents, which fall to the share of so small a number of men, were sufficient to direct our judgment and our conduct. But Providence has taken a better care of our happiness, and given us, in the simplicity of common sense, a rule for our direction by which we shall never be misled.”

In view of this opinion of confidence in plain *common sense*, so forcibly expressed by Lord Chatham, Colonel Pratt was accustomed to remark, “ If great men extol it, why should common men hesitate to use it ? ”

To speak of Mr. Pratt as a banker, we can do but little more than has already been done. His acts speak for him better than our humble pen can do. As a banker, he is seen in the institution he founded. Its management is fully characterized by his own genius, security, facility and promptitude, in all that relates to the public ; and the order, system and profit, which are consistent with the requisitions of law, his own views of duty, and feelings of self-respect. His views of what a bank ought to be are clearly and forcibly set forth in the occasional documents which he has published, but which need not be repeated here. We find in them a degree of practical remark which indicates his usual thorough mastery of principles. He has all the dignity which is claimed by the dispensers of wealth for the banker, without any of the habits of the aristocrat, the Shylock, or the speculator.

As a man, Mr. Pratt has ever been alive to the noblest sympathies of our nature ; and, as a citizen, his course of duty has been alike true to his country, and to his God. We may say of him as was said of Dr. Johnson : “ *He stands displayed in open day-light. Nothing remains undiscovered. Whatever he said is known.*”

In person, Colonel Pratt is above the medium size, and of a strong muscular frame. He has a finely marked head, of the practical order, somewhat resembling that of Henry Clay. His eye is dark and expressive, and his whole countenance beams with a lively intelligence, and a benevolent frankness. His manners are easy, cour-

teous and dignified ; and his temper mild and uniform. His movements are rapid, his salutation earnest and cordial, and every one is made to feel at home in his presence. We have seen several portraits of him, but no one is true to the life, unless it be the full-length one engraved by Dony. In this, the spirit and the natural language of firmness are well combined ; and it requires but little of a poet's genius to imagine the man standing before us rebuking a Hammatt, or lashing an Ingersoll.

In the sacred relations of friendship, he was the candid adviser, the liberal advocate, and the substantial contributor. He was always free, open and cheerful,* ever imparting to the weak a confident spirit, and to the depressed an inspiring courage.†

His domestic life was one of true affection, devotion and duty. Kind, firm, and susceptible of the holiest

*The same may be said of Colonel Pratt that Dr. Haller said of Boërhaave : “ He was modest, not timorous, and always *cheerful*. Calumny and detraction (which sometimes assailed even him) he never thought it necessary to confute, nor could they ever fret or sour his temper. He said they were sparks, which would go out of themselves, if you did not blow them ; and that the best way to get the better of malice was to live it down.”

† He used to quote, with much meaning, the lines of the poet on “ *modern friendship*,” as true to the world :

“ When fortune smiles, and looks serene,
’T is — ‘ Sir, how do ye do ?
Your family are well, I hope ;
Can I serve them or you ? ’

“ But turn the scale, — let fortune frown,
And ills and woes fly t’ ye, —
’T is then — ‘ I ’m sorry for your loss ;
But times are *HARD*, — good-by t’ ye. ’”

emotions, he could rejoice in the sunshine of joyous good, and weep with the children of affliction. He looked forward with the bright hopes of the Christian, and enjoyed, with the liveliest satisfaction, the exalted anticipations of future growth and condition. He was armed against the adversities of life by a knowledge of the causes which produced them ; and, in meeting with the most afflicting dispensations of Providence, he bowed in humble submission to the will of Him whose infinite wisdom alike protects the sparrow, and controls the destiny of the universe.

It is within the hallowed circle of home and neighborhood that the citizen imbibes the spirit of righteous intentions to his kind and to his country. His fireside associations become linked with the love which he bears to his native land ; and we soon find the true and faithful citizen as happy in his country's glory, as he is miserable in his country's shame.

It is seldom that we enjoy the privilege of finding such examples for study, as we have in Col. Pratt, *as a citizen*. Honorable, prompt, kind and liberal, he sought to be useful to others by inciting them to acts of duty and patriotism, while he scorned to avoid the share of responsible action which belonged to himself. He was not content to utter words alone, but endeavored to exhibit the true interests of men by a course of practical virtue and sound philanthropy.*

* In 1847, there was a "common school celebration" in Prattsville ; and, as the interesting procession was moving to the church, where appropriate exercises were to be performed, the instructors were requested to stop opposite the residence of

As a speaker and writer Col. Pratt made no pretensions. His profession required no rhetorical accomplishments. In his conversation he always employed simple and direct language, such as all could understand, and such as none could misconstrue. Whether he conversed, or spoke, or composed for the press, the same habits of simplicity predominated. His style was bold, concise, emphatic, and comprehensive. He used but few words, and they were well chosen. He employed language merely for the purpose of conveying useful suggestions, and he sought no occasions for display which were not embraced as opportunities to do good.* If for any one thing he was more remarkable than for anything else, it was his earnestness and sincerity of manner. He had no disguise. His thoughts were seen in his movements, —

Colonel Pratt. With a step and air as youthful as the youngest of the children, the colonel came out, and presented them with a superb banner, emblazoned with an American eagle and stars and stripes, thus early inviting the new generation to study and love the flag of their country.

* While Colonel Pratt was in Congress, the first time, one of his constituents requested an appointment to office in Washington. Faithful to the wishes of his fellow-citizen, he made inquiries in all the departments, but found no vacancy. The most favorable reply which he received, in answer to his inquiries, was from Mr. Poinsett, Secretary of War, who said "the best that he could do would be to place the name of his friend on his '*favorite list*.'" Colonel Pratt thanked him, but added, "May I be allowed to ask how many names are already on that list?" The clerk counted, and answered "four hundred and fifteen." Then turning kindly to his friend, Colonel Pratt, who remarked, "So you see how difficult it is to get a clerkship in Washington. And I can assure you that it would prove equally hard to retain it. There is much more certainty in any other business; and, what is quite as important to you, my friend, in any other business you can be your own master."

or, as phrenologists would say, in his natural language; and his speech followed only in confirmation of their truthfulness. His interesting encounter with Mr. Hammatt, in Congress, exhibits the man in his peculiar strength and power. Who could be more brief, and yet who could say more?

After completing his report which resulted in the erection of the beautiful building for the General Post-office, he read it to a literary friend, and desired him to correct the *grammar*, saying that he had never the fortune to go to college. "*You may thank God for that,*" replied his friend; "*for, if you had been there, you would never have been here.*"

His ability as a statistician was great. In this department his works will prove his best monument. They indicate a wide and systematic survey of men and things, and comprehend their various relations in practical positions. They teach useful knowledge, and illustrate the application of principles. He would not consent to act upon any important subject, unless placed in possession of all the facts necessary to a knowledge of the truth. These he immediately classified, with a precision and judgment that commanded the respect of the citizen, and the confidence of the legislator.

This striking characteristic may be seen in all his plans and business purposes. He commanded influence not only on account of his extensive knowledge of facts, but because he was skilled with an extraordinary judgment in the right use of them. His bureau of statistics was a meas-

ure in which he felt a deep interest. He had just reason to be proud of this national project ; and, if our government had executed the plan as faithfully as it was set forth by its author, our people would long ago have indulged in a feeling of something more than pride — a heart-felt gratitude.

The sphere of the legislator is one of fearful responsibility. To be a successful law-giver implies a knowledge of human nature, an ability to point out the best means for its advancement, and a capacity to see clearly the numerous wants of society and of nations, and promptly to provide for them.

To be able to study the acts of men in combination, and to trace out the results of conventional measures practically applied, requires a high order of intellect, and a just, clear conception of the natural laws.

In claiming for the subject of this biography *a high position as a legislator*, we are sustained by a mass of evidence which is within the reach of every mind, however humble, and which would be admitted by every mind, however exalted. He proved himself to be, in the halls of legislation, what he always had been in other spheres, a practical and a working man. He was called, throughout the country, “*the working man of Congress* ;” and probably no one was ever better entitled to the complimentary appellation. He was always at his post. During the two terms which he served, he was not absent a single day ; and, if we except the example of the late John Quincy Adams, this has no parallel in history. Nor

was his presence that of a passive member, to look on, and silently and indifferently witness the labors of others : but every motion was scrutinized, every statement verified, every sentiment scanned, and every proposition reduced to a practical analysis. He disliked speculation, or random action ; and would consent to no measure until prepared with a full knowledge of all the facts calculated to illustrate each particular case. He did not ask a course of labor in others, which he did not practically adopt for himself. He proposed no bill for consideration, unless accompanied with a full statement of the facts and reasons which influenced him to urge it upon his government, and to commend it to his fellow-citizens. In this respect, his course was one of perfect method, — an example worthy to be studied and followed by the statesmen of all countries.

When he was appointed chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings, he proceeded, at once, in a business way, to ascertain particularly what property was committed to his charge, its condition, and what steps were necessary to protect it. This really had never before been systematically attempted. His report will show how faithfully the labor was accomplished.

If a building was to be erected, his first inquiry was as to the real wants of the government, present and prospective ; and then to provide for them with a liberal, yet prudent hand. His comprehensive inquiries reached every particular of every part ; and members of Congress were not asked to give their votes for any undefined proposition, any uncertain expenditure. His suggestions

upon the subject of using the most permanent materials in the erection of public buildings are among the most valuable to be found in the document room at the Capitol. That the influence of his report is likely to prove permanent, may be inferred from the fact that the additions made the present year (1851) to the Patent Office are of marble, a material altogether dissimilar to that of the original buildings. Thus, the singular contrast between the old and the new portions will afford a lasting monument to the good sense of Mr. Pratt.

His reports and views respecting a Branch Mint in the City of New York, a Dry Dock at Brooklyn, Whitney's Railroad Project, the Cheap Postage System, the Remission of the Fine on General Jackson, the Bureau of Statistics, Public Buildings, "Imports, Tonnage and Revenue," the Relative Condition of the Northern and Southern States, &c., all forcibly illustrate his peculiar fitness to overlook and to direct the great interests of a nation, almost with as much ease and simplicity as the affairs of his tannery at Prattsville.*

Every subject has its boundaries, however small or however great; and it is the test of true skill and judg-

*The *Democratic Review*, December 9, 1846, in giving an extended notice of Colonel Pratt, together with a finely executed portrait of him, says: "In selecting the founder of Prattsville as the subject of this memoir, we have been actuated by a desire to do merited honor to that noble and enterprising spirit which marks the characteristic of the man, and to spread before the rising generation of our great and happy country the benefits of his example. He stands out in bold relief, — first making his fortune in active business, and then aiding in the councils of his country."

ment to fill those boundaries with well-directed exertions to master principles, and practically to apply them. They are similar in kind, though different in degree. If properly understood, they are simple, and easily applied. The way to do a thing well, is first to understand it. To do it at the right time, is to master whatever is incident to its nature or condition. A knowledge of theories may make a ready disputant, but a knowledge of facts alone can make a powerful one. To understand the use of things involves necessarily a knowledge of principles. Superadded to this, the ability to survey at a single glance the realities of life, in all their diversified relations and ultimate uses, is a power which may be regarded as the highest effort of wisdom and experience.

Although we might readily extend this chapter, and enlarge upon the requisites of a legislator of the practical school, still, we could not so easily and clearly convey our views, and do liberal justice to the honored subject of our notice, as to refer the reader to the various reports and documents which are the productions of his active mind, and which make a part of this volume.

What we have endeavored to explain and elucidate, he has done. His acts are well defined, and his views are the connecting links which exhibit their consistency. To say more, would be to doubt our own sincerity in what we have already advanced ; to say less, would indicate a culpable indifference to duty in the cause of truth. Words are but feeble symbols in the service of immortality, when thoughts, acts and works, rise up in their strength and

majesty, multiplying and extending their kind and results, in a world of being which is ever onward, upward and eternal. It is weakness to supplicate blessings upon the head of a good man; for the good man is blessed in his own strength, in his own deeds. His prayer is for health, continuance and duty. He does not labor for reward; he does not exercise his conscience to meet the stipulations of a contract; he does not keep an exchange account of virtues and courtesies with his neighbors or his God; but simply asks the privilege of being actuated by the elevated motives of disinterested love, duty and patriotism. He walks forth among men as the embodiment of truth, brotherly love and freedom.

Such has been the example of Zadock Pratt, of Prattsville. His deeds will rear for him a monument in the hearts of the people, more beautiful and more enduring than can be chiselled by a Canova from the marble quarry, more truthful than the record of a Tacitus, and more abiding than the pyramids of Egypt. They will be interwoven with the destiny of man, and continue to bless created being so long as life continues, and progress is a condition of the soul.

PART SECOND.

LITERARY AND STATISTICAL.

ADDRESSES.

MECHANICS THE ARCHITECTS OF THEIR OWN FORTUNES.*

GENTLEMEN OF THE MECHANIC SOCIETY: I am sure you have not invited me to address you on this occasion with any expectation of hearing from me the silvery sounds of eloquence. Like you, I have been taught to use my hands rather than my tongue. I am not ashamed at not being skilled in that which is not my business; and if any professional man, who has spent his days in schools and colleges, undertakes to criticize me to-night, I have only to say to him, come to my tannery, and do your best, and then see if, while you laugh at my lecture, I have not reason to laugh louder at your leather. If, gentlemen, you had given me an order for leather, you would, I trust, have expected the best quality, and you should not have been disappointed. But, as you have ordered an address, I know that you have done it not expecting much, and so I have in this also the consolation that you cannot be greatly disappointed.

Noah Webster, the great American dictionary and school-book maker, says, "A mechanic is a person whose occupation is to construct machines or goods, wares, instruments, furniture and the

* An address delivered before the Catskill Mechanic Society, on Thursday evening, December 29, 1842.

like." I should define a mechanic to be one who takes certain substances and materials in certain states, and works them into other combinations and conditions, by which they are rendered of higher use and greater value. Some writers on political economy have claimed that the producing class alone add to the national wealth. But what real wealth would there be in wheat, if there were no mechanic in the mill to grind it, and no mechanic in the kitchen to knead and bake it into bread?

I do not see that the process of growing is any more a creation of wealth than the process of grinding or baking. All are necessary to render it really of value. In fact, all the distinctions which have been made so laboredly between the usefulness of the producer and non-producer are but efforts to make out something where there is nothing to make out. I am not disposed to deny that even a lawyer, if he be an honest man and not a pettifogger, or a doctor, if he do not doctor too much, may both in their way be promoters of the peace, the health, and the wealth also, of the community.

The trader, too, although he neither produces anything nor manufactures anything, does the exchanging, collects and transports, and thus adds to the value; and so may it be said of the freighter and shipper, for they employ the mechanic, and in so doing benefit the community, and are promoters of the public wealth.

In various ways all honest men help society with their labor and skill; and if we could but persuade men to be honest and industrious, there would be no trouble about the public wealth.

They are consumers of the public wealth, who, destitute of any useful occupation, live by robbing the industrious by one means or another,—sometimes by the help of bad laws, and sometimes in violation of good ones.

The brawling politicians, who are so numerous in our free country, belong to the useless, and more than useless class. They have

spared no pains to make it out that there are other ways to get rich, both individually and collectively, much shorter and better than the old way of industry and economy, by which so many mechanics have travelled to competence and wealth. They would make you think that, if you can but have plenty of banks, you will, of course, have plenty of money; and that, if you can but borrow what you want, it is about as well as to own it.

But these delusions of speculators and political gamblers have been pretty essentially used up, within the last five years; and so have, I am sorry to say, a great many worthy men who attempted to practise on the run-in-debt theory.

Knowledge is easy to him that understandeth. Never before, gentlemen, did the mechanic arts occupy so high a position as now. The mechanical discoveries of this century have revolutionized the world. They have almost annihilated space, and outrun time. They have increased the powers of man by the aid of machinery, until one man can now perform the labor of ten, yes, of a hundred men. We should expect that this increase of power would put an end to labor, and make man an idle being, — his work being all done up by a few minutes' exertion, — but the opposite is the case, exactly. The savage, with no other means of conveyance but those which he finds in his own limbs, and no tools better than an axe rubbed from a hard stone, has plenty of leisure.

But industry becomes more urgent, as human powers increase. He whose mechanical genius has given him the ability to do the work of fifty men has no time to stop, is always pressed with labor. I need not repeat to you, if I could, the catalogue of the mechanical inventions which have flooded our land. The cotton-gin of the much wronged Whitney, and the spinning-machine of Arkwright, have opened upon the world the boundless benefits of the cotton plant; so that, in fifty years, cotton has grown from nothing to be the largest commercial article in the world.

The wealth of the richest nation on the globe has been created more from cotton than any other source, and there is nothing, in all the round of things produced, which compares with cotton, in benefiting mankind. Yet cotton without the mechanic is nothing.

The application of steam as a power, by means of machinery, has marked an era in the advancement of our race; and now steam has become a universal servant of man. Horses, oxen, and all animal powers, tire; but steam labors without fatigue. I need not repeat to you the boundless benefits which are now conferred on mankind by the means of steam. You see them in the magnificent palaces which float upon our noble rivers, transporting their hundreds of guests from place to place, with almost the speed of an eagle's flight. You see them in the railroads by which our country is intersected and bound together in almost every direction. They are familiar to you as household words.

All the physical powers man holds in control by the still higher powers of his own genius. Vast powers pervade matter in all directions; but there is no soul in cotton, or iron, or steam; no spirit to move them, — but how numerous their combinations for use and power! The spirit is all in man.

The Great Mechanic, who made the vast machinery of the universe, and created the mighty powers which, one after another, man has found buried in the confusion of matter, He made little man the genius of the whole. Man turns the ships with a little rudder, and lets out or shuts in the tremendous powers of steam by turning a key which he holds between his thumb and finger.

Not contented with the powers already at his service, man has thrown his halter over the neck of the thunderbolt, and bade him stop and change his course, or wait his pleasure. Electricity is made to fly from point to point, many miles apart, at the twinkling of an eye, and carry and deliver messages with the docility of a child.

Let me quote to you, on this subject, from the London Quarterly Review :

“The electro-magnetic telegraph of Professor Wheatstone, now in use upon the Blackwell and Grand Western Railway, was the first achievement in this science.

“The telegraph, with its alarums, goes into a case not larger than that of a small table-clock; and so simple are its operations that a child can both read and send the messages, with scarcely a minute’s instruction.

“The electro-magnetic clock of Professor Wheatstone is another of those singular inventions, and one which, though it may be less useful, is certainly not less ingenious and surprising than his telegraph.”

The object of the inventor was to enable a single clock to indicate exactly the same time in as many different places, distant from each other, as may be required. A standard clock would then keep in order another clock in each apartment; and then, too, with such accuracy that all of them, however numerous, will beat dead seconds audibly, with as much precision as the standard astronomical time-pieces with which they are connected.

But, besides this, the subordinate time-pieces thus regulated vary none of the mechanism for maintaining or regulating the power.

They consist simply of a face with its second, minute and hour hands, and a train of wheels which communicate motion from the action of the second hand and to that of the hour hand, in the same manner as an ordinary clock train.

I see, by the newspapers, that large numbers of wooden clocks have recently been imported into England from the United States. Professor Wheatstone must keep a sharp look-out, or the Yankees will have their wooden clocks galvanized so that they will all go together, and cut out the professor’s.

If all these benefits, and ten thousand others, have been conferred

on our race by the mechanic arts, we certainly, as mechanics, have no need to be ashamed of our business, or our positions in society.

If we look at the men who have been distinguished for usefulness in our world, many of the most distinguished have been mechanics. One of the most popular lecturers of the present day is the learned blacksmith. Among ourselves, many of our mechanics are most useful and highly respected citizens. To confirm this, I need only mention the names of the much lamented William Seaman, Henry Ashley, Foster Morss. It is not wealth, but worth, that makes the man. Other worthy men will occur to your minds, as they do to mine. The list, I am happy to say, is too long to be all recited.

I am sorry to say, in connection with these honorable examples, that the mechanic artists have not been free from examples of a very opposite character. O, how many mechanics of great skill have destroyed their faculties, and ruined themselves and their families, by intemperance, by gambling, by indolence! How many, who might have been respected and happy all their lives, have rendered themselves miserable and odious by their vices! A sentiment was at one time prevalent which almost compelled mechanics to be vicious. Practices grew into laws, compelling men to treat and be treated, until genius and skill were changed into besotted stupidity. The wages of a month's labor were expended in a day's debauch. But I will not dwell on this, nor repeat the names which so sadly crowd on my memory and yours. Let us rejoice that a better day has dawned upon us. The odious customs which bad opinions had established have most of them been repealed by more enlightened views. Temperance has performed a mighty work of reformation, and no class of our fellow-citizens have felt the benefits more than mechanics. Let us press on to a still higher state of moral and religious character. Let us do what we can to reclaim those who

have entered upon wrong courses, and to confirm the resolution of those who maintain their integrity. Let us all sustain each other. I rejoice, gentlemen, in the establishment of an association, among the mechanics of our county, for the promotion of knowledge and virtue. I rejoice in the establishment of the respectable association which I have the honor to address this evening. I commend your design. I commend you for all the good you have already done, and all that you intend to do. With the industry and ingenuity of mechanics, I am sure you will be able to overcome all the obstacles which may be in your path. I hope that, with the favor of God, your association may be long and prosperously continued; — that it will do much to promote the intelligence and happiness of its members and their families; much to elevate the mechanic's character, wherever your influence shall extend; teaching that honesty, sobriety, industry, and punctuality, should be the corner-posts of every mechanic's shop.

I will close by saying, Learn to think for yourselves. Remember you are the architects of your own fortunes.

PRACTICAL EDUCATION.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: In obedience to the call of the trustees of the Spencertown Academy, I appear before you on this occasion, and am happy to congratulate both you and them, and the citizens of Columbia county generally, on the completion of this beautiful edifice, and the opening of its halls for the purposes of public instruction. It is truly an ornament to your pleasant village, and reflects honor upon the intelligence and public spirit of those who have taken hold of the enterprise with earnest hands, and have carried it through to its completion. Credit is also due to the fairer portion of creation, who on this occasion have shown themselves truly the "help-meet of man." It is truly an honor to its noble-minded founders, and to the state; and this beautiful and substantial building is now set apart for the purposes of education, where all may come and taste of the fountain of knowledge, as they go to your neighboring springs to drink in the waters of health. I doubt not, generations yet unborn will rise to bless the memory of the liberal founders of this academy; and, if there be any amongst you, who, from avarice or selfish motives, have withheld their due share from this great and noble undertaking, I would say to them, come in even at the eleventh hour, lest your children and posterity should rise up against you; for, truly, the great object of accumulating wealth is to be useful.

I confess, my friends, that I was not a little surprised, when I received the invitation to address you; because, as a plain business man, I am not much given to making speeches, and am not in the

* An address delivered at the dedication of the Spencertown Academy, New York, September 23, 1847.

habit of making pretensions to what I do not understand, or of giving promises which I cannot perform. Little did I think I should ever be called upon to address my fellow-citizens on an occasion like this, so near my native place [Stephentown]. Had it been your pleasure to call for an essay upon the qualities of hemlock bark, as used in the preparation of an article without which you would have nothing to stand upon, and but for which, I dare say, not an individual in this assembly would have been here to-day, I should have been ready; for in that field I am at home. Had you required of me to tell you how a young man, thrown penniless upon the world, may carve out his own fortune, by industry, economy, integrity, virtue, and perseverance, I think I could have given some hints upon that subject, also. But I must say I felt great reluctance, when your worthy trustees invited me here to address you, — because we generally see liberally educated men, men belonging to the class called the learned professions, and not plain farmers or mechanics, singled out to appear on occasions like the present. I dare say, too, that many a gentleman now before me could give you a much more edifying and instructive address than I shall pretend to offer. All I can promise is, that I will not detain you a great while, in the delivery of a few brief thoughts that have occurred to my mind, amid the busy cares of life, since I received your invitation to be here; and all I have to ask is, that you will bear in mind that you are listening to a plain man, and give to his remarks just as much consideration as they deserve, and no more. In other words, “Do as you would be done by.”

We live in a free country. So our constitutions and laws tell us; and, from all that we can see and feel, we believe it is so. The pulpit and the press declare this great truth; and it is still the burden, occasionally, of our Fourth of July orations. But are we so educated as to *understand* that we are free? to know, in reality, *what freedom is*? Is enough attention paid, in our higher

schools and academies, to this great object? I think not. There is not one of us, at the present day, who knows anything of oppression, as exercised by a despotic government. We never saw it, or felt it, or feared its coming. We all have a voice in public affairs, the poor man just as much as the rich man. We vote just as we please, and for whom we please; and we sometimes, it would seem, put men up or put them down, just to let them understand that the people govern,—that we are, in fact, the governors. We go to church where we please—and I hope all go to church somewhere; we pay what we choose and can afford to do for the support of the gospel; and we know nothing, practically, of kings, lords, or hierarchy,—nothing but what we read in books, or in the current history of other nations of the world. Such being our position,—substituting, as we do, the government of the people for the rule of a king,—how important is it that all the people should be educated, so far, at least, as to know their rights and privileges, and how to maintain them!

It has been said by a great man of England—Lord Bacon—that “knowledge is power;” and, if it be true as applied to a monarchical system of government, how much more true is it when applied to a republic!

Young men, remember that you are soon to take the place of your elders; soon on you this academy will lean for support; and, before you are aware of it, you will become the pillars of society. The youth now at their studies will soon fill these important stations, for good or for evil; and, truly, the instruction which will here be given will flow forth over the land, if rightly given, by good teachers, dispensing *wisdom* and *power*.

Our greatest statesmen have, on all occasions, recognized the vast importance of educating the people—the great masses, who constitute the bone and sinews and greatness of a country. WASHINGTON, though not himself trained to the wisdom of the schools,

as a great self-taught man and leader among men, recognized this great duty of education. And FRANKLIN, the apprentice boy, who rose to be one of the greatest men of the age, gave his testimony in favor of education.

Let me stop here, just to remind my young friends that they must not adopt it as a rule, that, because BEN FRANKLIN, the philosopher, ran away from his master, therefore all runaway boys will make philosophers !

But what is education ? It is the business of life ; and he is the best scholar who is always learning, in the school or out of it, from teachers, from friends, companions, from all about him.

Nature is a great teacher, and we may learn many a lesson that may be useful to us from the world of living things around us. The school-room is not the only place where knowledge is to be found, the knowledge which is practical and useful in life. I look upon our schools as the great instruments, under Divine Providence, of opening to the rising generation the grand vista of knowledge ; and if I could recommend any change in our system of education, it would not be to relax their tone, or subject them to any new-fangled theories, but to inculcate upon all teachers the importance of making the pupil thoroughly *understand* what he is taught, and how to apply it to use. Make everything, as far as possible, practical, substantial ; and, while the scholar is laying up a stock of knowledge generally, his great aim should be to make it available and useful particularly in reference to the trade or occupation he intends to follow. We know in practical life that men often accomplish much without learning,—but how much easier could they do it with it ! Many of you may be called to fill high stations in government, which you now little think of attaining to. The scholar who feels his way along, carefully and surely, will know every part of the ground he travels over, and can tell you all about it ; whilst one who has been allowed to skim the surface with

a sort of railroad speed, knows no more at the end of the journey than he did at the beginning, only that he has been over so much ground, has been through certain books in certain studies, and has good marks for lessons, and all that; but what is in the books, or what he has learned, he cannot, for the life of him, tell! I have seen some men, wearing college honors, who could not state an account, measure an acre of upland, or even tell who was governor! This may be an extreme case; but it shows that faults exist in our systems of education, which ought to be remedied. Some say the fault is in the teacher, and others say it is wholly that of the pupil. I am inclined to think there are faults on both sides,—a desire, in both teacher and scholar, to go ahead too fast, to cover too much ground, for the sake of making a show. This getting an education in a few weeks, or months, seems a little like imposture. It is not unlike some of the new discoveries for tanning hides, by which good sole-leather is said to be made in six weeks,—while your old-fashioned, thorough method of tanning, requires as many months. Look at the leather produced by each. The one is but half-tanned, green and worthless, while the other is solid, owns its affinity to the tanner, and is durable. So with a boy pushed ahead too fast in school;—he comes out “half-tanned,” and, practically, knows but little more than when he entered it. The truth is, my friends, that education, after all, is principally the work of the individual himself. The idea that a teacher, however patient and faithful, can make a boy learn, without his hearty coöperation, is absurd. Some have supposed that if a young man be sent to the grammar-school, and then to college, he must, of course, become a scholar. But the professors can tell you how great a mistake this is; and let me tell you, my young friends, that, if you expect to obtain an education without labor,—constant, ever-active and willing labor,—you will find yourselves mistaken. You must labor with your head, as well as your hands. If you aspire to excellence, you must

work,—work with your teachers, work early and late, and constantly at your studies, endeavoring to understand everything as you proceed, and never laying by one study for another, until sure that you have mastered it, and never saying “you can’t do,” but boldly saying “you’ll try.”

Let every young man remember that he must be the architect of his own fortune. Schools may open their doors, friends may lend a helping hand,—but of what avail is it, if he does not love to study? Academies and colleges may open their portals, and extend to him the very best opportunities for instruction; but on him, after all, it depends whether he will be instructed or not. As the good book saith, “He that asketh receiveth, he that seeketh findeth.” Slothfulness in study brings the same result that it does in any business of life — failure and disappointment. Let the young man understand that he has but to study earnestly, and he will learn; if he wishes to become learned, the way is opened to him in our common schools; and, in such excellent establishments as this, the humblest scholar may rise to the highest honors, if he will only form a steadfast resolution to do so. Set your mark high up, and then strive to reach it. Our country, above all others on the globe, holds out prospects of wealth and honor to the gaze of all, the prizes of such as are found faithful and persevering to the end. There is no country, under the broad canopy of heaven, where nature has done so much for man,—none where the growth of the whole man is so favored,—as in this free country.

And now let me say a few words on what I conceive to be the great secret of every man’s success in the struggle of life. It is, decision of character. This is a quality which every young man who hopes to succeed in the world should endeavor to cultivate and establish, and which I think our teachers would do well to encourage and develop. I do not mean, by decision of character, a blustering spirit, for your blusterer is never brave. Nor do I

mean obstinacy, or that sort of rashness which sticks to error because it has been adopted. Neither do I mean that rudeness of manners, or arrogance, which is sometimes thought to proceed from calm purpose and decision. Far different. I mean that decision which looks to truth as its pole star, and has wisdom and virtue for its allies; that strong and vigorous decision, which embraces the right and despises the wrong, steadily pursuing its ever onward and honorable course. I look upon decision, in this light, as the leading characteristic of man, whether in public or private life, in the learned or unlearned professions, in the hum of business or in the domestic circle. Some may, perhaps, say that this is a quality which is born with us, and which cannot be acquired. Without disputing the fact that some men have constitutionally more marked characters and greater courage than others, I am still of the opinion that every man possesses the gift to a certain degree, and that he only needs the proper discipline to bring it into action. If it be asked how is this to be done, I answer, it is nothing more nor less than the firm resolve of the mind to do, always, and under all circumstances, what is right, and to keep doing it. The man who resolves upon this course already possesses the charm which will protect him; and his way of life will be firm and steady, because he has nothing to fear from the world, and is sure of the approbation of Heaven.

In the busy scenes of life, we are, or ought to be, every day of our lives, learning something, and living to be useful, whether our path lie in the pursuits of literature or the pursuits of wealth.

Let the young men who desire to succeed adopt the great principle of doing right, and they will see no lions in the path. Allow me to say, "Young men, learn to think for yourselves;" and this will apply as well to the ladies as to the gentlemen. Don't let any think their education completed when they have left the academy or the college. When they begin business, and are struggling

to be rich, let them remember the wise man's advice to his son, "With all thy gettings, get understanding." If any are struggling to gather all kinds of knowledge, let them remember that there is a knowledge of common things which is essential, and that in more senses than one it is important for every student to cultivate and preserve a good stock of common sense. It has been my fortune to meet with men, in public and private stations, richly gifted with all sorts of sense except plain common sense.

Another lesson to be learned by the young is that of perseverance. There is a good old motto, that "Perseverance conquers all things." So that, when any of my young friends, seeing a heavy task upon them, begin to get discouraged, they have only to *persevere*. If they fail at one trial, they must *try again*, and never despair; and the truth of this good old motto will become apparent to them. Knowledge is easy to him who understandeth, and there are few who by constant and faithful effort fail to win it.

It is true that, in this world, we are born to equal rights, but not with equal gifts. There is one talent given to one, two to another, and more to a third,—all to be rightly accounted for in the great day of settlement. There are inequalities of genius and fortune, because our Maker has so ordered it; but Providence has endowed all with the capacity of improvement and happiness, and there is no limit set to our progress in knowledge and goodness. All have the power to be good, to be just and merciful, to be kind to one another and to the poor, and to seek the happiness of those around them. All have the power to do good, in one way or another; and this is one of the first lessons that should be impressed upon the minds of youth. Is a man prosperous? He should rejoice in the prosperity of others, and be willing to "live and let live;" in other words, to "live with his neighbor, and not on him." Is he poor and unfortunate? He should not envy his

more fortunate neighbor, but set himself to work to find out the real cause why he is not better off himself.

Nearly a hundred years ago, a quaint writer, under the signature of Poor Richard, gave to the world a little pamphlet, entitled "The Way to Wealth." It was full of striking proverbs, containing the wisdom of many ages and nations, which, being thus brought forward, formed one of the most valuable publications ever given to the world. It was published and circulated all over this country, and was printed in the different languages of Europe. It was read in our schools; and the lessons it inculcated, of economy, sobriety, temperance, industry and virtue, were such as should be still taught by every teacher in every school of our land. I need not repeat the glorious maxims which glitter like gems in that little book; but I most earnestly request all my young friends,—and old ones, if there be any who have not often read it,—to procure the tract, and learn it by heart. It contains a vast fund of practical wisdom, which, duly considered, would multiply and extend the means and desire of doing good.

My friends, I am sensible I have detained you too long with my desultory remarks. In my youth, I felt the want of such an institution as this; but I know the value of education in a country like ours, and am for doing all that I can to promote the cause. I have lived among an industrious, working people, all my days; and it gives me great pleasure to be now addressing people of that class,—the bone and sinew of the land,—the only people in the world we cannot do without. If I have met with a reasonable share of success in life, by "minding my own business," it has been owing to the blessing of Heaven upon a life of active industry and perseverance — virtues which I have in my plain way endeavored to recommend. I rejoice, as a citizen of this great state, in the prosperity of all her various interests. I am proud that she has done so much for her schools and academies, and that you are

now to add one more to the thousand springs from whence the streams of knowledge flow to bless our land. In doing all that we can, by encouragement and counsel, in aiding institutions like this, as well as our religious societies, we do much to support society, to promote the cause of virtue and religion, and to honor the God that made us.

LEARNING TO THINK FOR OURSELVES, AND TO MIND OUR OWN BUSINESS.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Were I only to consult my own feelings, in reference to appearing before an audience so highly respectable and intelligent as the one I now see around me, I should refrain from addressing you on this occasion, and ask some one of the many gentlemen now present to assume the task, and discharge the duty which your committee has assigned to me. But it always has been a maxim with me, that the object of living is to do good, and to do all the good we can; and, while entertaining these views of duty from man to man in the social state, I have not felt at liberty to decline the invitation to appear before you, this evening.

I most heartily approve of associations of this kind, for mutual benefit and improvement. They can scarcely fail to do good, in one form or another, by the information derived from these cheerful meetings, — the curiosity aroused to read, to hear, and to learn more and more, — and by the spirit of self-respect and self-reliance which these unions of mechanics and reading working-men are calculated to nourish and sustain. I say, I am warmly in favor of these meetings for improvement, and am willing, therefore, to contribute my mite to the general stock of knowledge which your course of lectures is calculated to produce.

The subject to which I would ask your attention, for a brief space, is a very plain one, and, therefore, not often dwelt upon in lectures or addresses. It is one which more naturally calls for

* Address delivered before the Franklin Library Association, Hudson, New York, 1848.

practical than theoretical observations; and you will not, therefore, expect any high-wrought and showy language from me, but a few reflections of a practical kind, in the nature of land-marks, such as the subject and my own experience suggest to my mind. I propose to address a few words to all who would earn the title of true mechanics and business men, upon the value of the simple maxim, — “MIND YOUR BUSINESS.”

The young mechanics of our country have every reason to be thankful for the privileges which they enjoy in this highly favored land. The iron hand of oppression can never trouble them, so long as they are true to themselves, and fulfil their high duties as sons, brothers and citizens. A comparison of the condition of the mechanics in England, France, or any other part of Europe and the eastern world, with your situation here, ought to fill your hearts with gladness, strengthen your hands, and nerve your arms to defend your high privileges, and to act well your part in the business of life. In England, for instance, the young mechanic, no matter how faithfully he has served out an apprenticeship to a trade, is obliged to continue in the parish where he was born; or, if he attempt to set up his trade anywhere else, he is compelled to degrade himself, by giving security that he will not become a pauper, and a charge to the parish.

Suppose, now, any one of the young mechanics I see here should go down to Catskill and commence business there, and the day he is all prepared, his sign up, and his hands busy at work, the supervisors of Greene should step in and ask him to give bonds that he will not become a pauper, — what would he think of it? And yet, such is the law of England.

In France, the young mechanic, however industrious and worthy, can, in no case, set up business without a license, — always hard to be obtained; while in Germany, no young man can set up as

master workman, in any trade whatever, except to supply the place of some one deceased, or some person retiring from business.

Thank God, my young friends,—and you cannot be too thankful,—that your lot is cast here, in this free and happy land, where no such cruel restraints are imposed, but where each one can pursue his own calling wherever he chooses to establish himself, with none to molest or make him afraid, and where every young man, who puts forth the necessary energy and perseverance, can assuredly succeed.

One would be apt to think, from the common talk of politicians and statesmen about our institutions, that the only improvement we have made, beyond other countries, is in adopting a free constitution, where every man has a voice in the government, is a part of it, and bears a part of the sovereignty in his own person. But it is not so; a greater even than that is the freedom which pervades the social state, — which gives unrestrained scope to talent and industry, — which promises encouragement and sure reward to labor, and which recognizes true worth, in whatever rank of life or fortune it is placed. It is this principle, which, more than anything else, keeps down the grasping spirit of the aristocracy of power and wealth, and prevents any man, or set of men, from acquiring an undue ascendancy or control over our lives and fortunes.

In other countries, mechanics and working men are generally looked upon as an inferior class, — as if industry and labor were something degrading, and to be ashamed of. Men who have happened to be born to a title, and to the possession of wealth, plume themselves upon the merit of their ancestors, for want of any of their own; while he who, by enterprise and energy, earns an independence for himself, and by integrity of character obtains the noblest of all titles, — that of an “honest man,” — is passed by, because he is a mechanic, or the son of a mechanic.

My friends, there is something in all this peculiar to monarchical systems; and we can pardon the man who conforms to a system that fills his pocket, and gives him power over others. There is something stately and imposing in the aristocracy of old England. It can boast of antiquity; it has sometimes done service to the state; and, though it crushes the people like the car of Jugger-naut, it is their custom to look up to it, and they are fools enough to prostrate themselves beneath its crushing weight. But what shall we say of those who would assume to be a privileged class in our country? Of those who would ape the aristocracy of Europe, or the parvenus of our own country,—of those who are weak enough and foolish enough to pretend to despise honest labor, and to neglect, or affect to undervalue, the industrious mechanic and laboring man, or the tiller of the soil, who furnishes food or raiment alike for us all? I need not express my opinion of such an absurdity. Such beings are really too contemptible to waste words upon. *Your own* opinion of all such pretenders to superior rank or station I am sure agrees with mine. I fear they too often live, after all, on the labor of others.

Happily, the number is small of those who ape the aristocracy of other countries; and, thanks to our free institutions and the republican tendencies of the age, they are every day growing less. The dignity of mechanical pursuits is not, I think, generally understood. To me it seems to be everywhere undervalued.

But, I would ask, is not mechanical labor, in fact, one of the highest and noblest pursuits of man? What pursuit, let me ask, has produced such great results? We hear of the old philosophers and astronomers; but did any of them find out how to make glass, or construct a watch or a water-wheel? No. Did any one of them discover the art of printing? Certainly not; they were buried so deep in their philosophy, that their principal labors consisted in casting nativities, or searching for the philosopher's stone, while

to practical men, to mechanics, the world owes these and other great discoveries.

We read of the great Sir Isaac Newton, who developed the system of the universe, and counted some three millions of fixed stars through his telescope. But who made the telescope? who contrived the wonderful instrument which revealed to him these glories? A MECHANIC! Who, at a later day, enabled another great astronomer — Herschel — to penetrate still further into the mysteries of the stars? Why, it was a practical mechanic, as well as a philosopher. Who made the great telescope which, turned towards the heavens, exhibited, as was estimated, two hundred and fifty thousand stars passing over its fields in a quarter of an hour? A mechanic. Without the aid of the mechanic, then, neither of these great men could have unfolded his sublime conceptions, or have secured the fame which the world has accorded to his discoveries. Look at the great discoveries; you will see that nothing succeeds, no discovery is made useful, unless the practical mind is there.

A poor barber of Bolton, in England, about a hundred years ago, conceived a plan of shortening the labor of spinning cotton,—of making thread by machinery, which from the earliest times had been done by hand,—and, with the aid of a watchmaker of a neighboring village, he constructed the spinning-jenny, which has added millions to the wealth of England, and multiplied the comforts of the civilized world. The poor title of Knight was all the reward which the haughty aristocracy of England could concede to the mechanic Arkwright; but his name will live longer than the proudest of theirs,—as long as that of England herself.

To the skill of the mechanic the world owes the invention of the cotton-gin, which has tripled the value of the acres of the Southern States, and made fortunes by hundreds of millions to the planters and manufacturers of cotton. And yet I have looked in

vain, throughout the cities of the south, for a monument to Whitney. Though a mechanic, he will outlive the generations to whom he opened the way to wealth, because he put his mark upon the age in which he lived, and created a monument that can never be destroyed.

And the great mechanic of New York,—who would not be proud of the name of mechanic, borne by such a man as Fulton?

I need not pursue these reflections here, for I am sure that among the intelligent people of this flourishing city, which owes so much of its prosperity to the labor and skill of its mechanics, the name and pursuit of the mechanic are properly understood and appreciated. No industrious man is thought the less of here, I venture to say, because he is a mechanic.

Our country owes her present unexampled prosperity to the mechanical interests, more than to any other; and our history, from the Revolution down to this day, shows that our people fully understand the importance of them. The council of the nation, and the legislative bodies of the states, have never been less distinguished or less fortunate from the presence of a due proportion of mechanics in their halls.

From the nature of our institutions, it naturally follows that practical knowledge is that most valued, and which everybody wants; in other words, is that which can do the most good. Like the Christian religion, it is never out of place.

The farmer, the mechanic, or the business man, who succeeds in life, will tell you that his success resulted from his practical knowledge, rather than from theory; and, more than all, from a strict adherence to the maxim, “Mind your Business.”

Practical knowledge makes the man. Who amongst you can do without it? Eloquence has swayed multitudes, has sometimes perverted justice, and corrupted States; but did it ever build a monument, construct a telescope, invent the art of printing, dis-

cover and apply the tremendous agency of steam, or invent any of the thousand machines which have helped the hand of labor, and blessed the millions of mankind? Certainly not; and the practical man may say to those most gifted in eloquence, as was said to the great Athenian orator, "What you say, I CAN DO."

I look upon intelligence, my friends, as the main pillar in the character of the mechanic; and the superior advantages which the working-man enjoys in our country, the freedom from restraint and the general intelligence which everywhere prevail, constitute the great difference between the working-man of the Old and of the New World, and furnish an additional reason why every one should act well his part. The eastern nations are favored by nature beyond those of the west, but are oppressed by the tyranny of rulers, and degraded by ignorance.

With every encouragement to perseverance, both from the advantages we enjoy from our peculiar climate, so well adapted to bring out the whole energies of man, and from the hope of reward, let me urge all young men, mechanics especially, to remember that perseverance conquers all obstacles; and that the promise that he who seeks shall find, and to him that knocks, the door shall be opened, is as true as the ordinary business of life, as in the concerns of immortality.

Learn to take care of yourselves, my young friends; so shall you cease to be dependent, and be able to fulfil your mission in life, which is to do good. Study men and things, and carefully make up your minds for yourselves. Seek the truth till you find it, and never forsake the paths of virtue. So will you be sure to prosper; and, though anxieties and difficulties may often beset you, remember that, if you persevere, you will find no lions in the way.

My young friends, whatever may be said to the contrary, man is a working being. It is his destiny, the law of his nature, to

labor. He is made for it, and he cannot live without it; and the Apostle summed up the whole matter, when he declared, with emphasis, that "If any would not work, neither should he eat." All the great men who ever lived were workers; and you never heard of a really great man who was not a hard worker. The life of every great and good man points to this as a fact.

The history of greatness is itself but a history of great labor; and all the great statesmen, divines, and philosophers or warriors, of ancient and modern times, were renowned as hard workers. This constitutes a part of their fame, and without it they would no longer be famous; for no one, now-o'-days, hears it said in commendation of a man, that he can sleep fifteen hours out of the twenty-four; that he can eat six meals a day, and never get tired of his easy-chair. No, my friends, such kind of praise as that would soon use a man up.

I have said that man is a working being. Labor makes wealth, and to none will it apply with more force than to you, my brother mechanics. Learn to labor, and you will have a fortune, if you but save it. Nothing compares with labor; it is the lamp of Aladdin to the poor as well as to the rich.

Some may say that it is in vain to try,—it is impossible for me to succeed; I can't do it; I am not a lucky one; I was not born to good fortune. To all such, I would say, as the brave Miller did, when storming the heights at Bridgewater, "TRY, SIR." That magic word "TRY" has wrought wonders in the world, I can assure you. TRY, my young friends, TRY. It is true that the success of men is not the same, for the Creator has not endowed all men alike; but the Scripture parable of the talents intrusted to the three servants, and the rebuke administered to the slothful servant, who hid his one talent in the earth, instead of striving to improve it, is an admonition to all to make the best use of the gifts which they have.

The rich man is often envied for his costly possessions. But who is the truly rich man? I will tell you: it is not he who has the most money, but he who does the most good in the world; who does it while living, — for no dead man does any good.

We live to learn, and should learn something every day of our lives; and we ought to say, freely we receive and freely we will give. Learning is the rich man's ornament, the poor man's riches; and the best of all learning is that which we never repent of, nor wish to forget.

When King David gave up his throne to Solomon, he charged him to be strong and show himself a man, — to walk in the ways of the Lord, that he might prosper. And how beautiful is the vision which came to Solomon in a dream, at Gibeon! He prayed the Lord to give him an understanding heart, that he might judge and discern between the good and the bad. "And God said unto him, because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked it for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, behold, I have done according to thy words, and have given thee also that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor." This grand vision of Solomon is a lesson for all mankind. Such wisdom, such understanding! Put forth the powers which the great Creator has given you. Do you expect to flourish in this world without exertion? Can any one hope for success unless he tries to succeed? Seed-time and harvest are promised to all; but he who does not sow can scarcely expect to reap. The harvest does not come for him; and it is vain for him to say he is unlucky, — he certainly will be so always. For what is the use of talent, of skill, of learning, or enterprise, unless you exert it?

The good book tells you that faith without works is dead; and, if it be true in spiritual things, how much more so in temporal!

We read of a bigoted Spanish monarch, who refused to have a

canal cut across some part of his dominions, because, said he, if God had designed it, he would have made it. It is of a piece with those narrow and wretched views of life and duty which would make man a mere animal, without intelligence or usefulness.

No, my young friends, action and effort are necessary to accomplish the end of life. God has placed mines of wealth in the earth, in ores of iron, copper, silver and gold; but we must dig to find them, must labor to bring them from the bowels of the earth. Action, I say, action is necessary, and without it no one can succeed; the sea-faring man might as well throw up his chart and compass, and depend upon the winds and currents of the ocean.

There are lucky men in the world, my friends, as you have often heard and seen, no doubt; but this thing, let me say to you, I never saw a lucky man, nor heard of one, who was not an active man, and who did not try to be lucky, and labor hard to win his good fortune. Accident may sometimes lead to great enterprises. But you will find, in such cases, the mind of the fortunate man was directed with intense eagerness to the object which he at last accomplished. He did not let the subject chain a *little* of his attention, but a *good deal*. He laid down his landmarks, he studied, he pushed ahead, determined to succeed; and he did succeed. It was so with Sir Isaac Newton; it was so with Franklin, Fulton and Whitney, and so it may be with you, my young friends.

I have said that there is no country on the globe so well calculated to produce the whole man as our northern region. This is proved by the fact that the enterprise of the Yankees pushes itself into the remotest corners of the earth. I was some time since travelling in company with an intelligent Englishman, when the conversation turned upon the adventurous spirit of the Americans. He said he had travelled in all parts of the globe. When in the northern seas, he went as far as an Englishman dared to go, and there he heard that the Yankees were a hundred leagues

further north, catching whales. In the centre of Russia, he found the enterprise of the Yankee engaged in making railroads, engines and locomotives; and was there told of a party of Yankees going to Lapland, with air-tight stoves! In the interior of the great Mogul empire, he met these persevering Yankees; and crossing the Great Desert of Sahara, who should overtake him but a camel-driving Yankee, with India-rubber water-bags for market! He could only stop to say, "How are you? If you see any of my countrymen, say that I am well, and hope to dine with the Prince of the Arabs in nine days more. Good-by!" Yankee indomitable perseverance stops for nothing. With a constitution as hardy as that of the grizzly bear, an eye that glances over a continent, a mind that grasps at a single view all God's creation,—such is the high-wrought opinion of an English traveller of Yankee enterprise and perseverance. I believe it is a peculiar trait of our people, and that great good is yet to grow out of it, for the benefit of the whole world of mankind.

One of the great secrets of success in life is perseverance. Let me commend it to you, one and all. When trials and discouragements dishearten you, and you feel as though you could not surmount your difficulties, perseverance will save you, and prove the sword of Alexander to cut the Gordian Knot. Never give up, my friends; never despair. I see before me young men, some of whom it is no vain thing to prophesy will yet become known and distinguished in the world, and be called, perhaps, to high and honorable stations. I bid them God speed; and I would whisper in the ear of every one, and ask him to remember the talismanic words, *Mind your Business!* It is homely advice, but it is nevertheless good advice, and never yet led any one astray.

I have seen many, in the course of my dealings with men, and acquaintance with the ladies, who have made themselves useful, rich and happy, by *Minding their own Business*; and I can truly

say, I have never found the person yet who ever regretted it. The maxim may with propriety be addressed to all classes. You who are in humble life, who would be respected and esteemed, if you wish others to aid you, let me tell you that the first step is to *Mind your Business*. You who are rich must remember that a due observation of this great maxim made you rich; and that, if you would not be poor, you must continue to *Mind your Business*. To the poor man who wishes to be rich, there is no surer way than to *Mind his Business*.

You now and then, perhaps, see a farmer hanging about a tavern or store, while his neighbor's brindled cow or unruly steer is in his corn-field, his fences broken down, or the gate to his field left carelessly open. How excellent a thing it would be for that man, if he would only *Mind his Business*.

The mechanic, too, instead of wasting the hours of the morning or evening in running up scores at the tavern or the grog-shop, would find it vastly for his comfort, and that of his family, to *Mind his Business*.

The pettifogger who thrives best when he can set people by the ears would earn a better name, if he would *Mind his own Business*; and the honest lawyer, who would earn the confidence of his clients, the respect of jurors and of the bench, must *Mind his Business*. The man ambitious of honors, and sacrificing his time and money, and sometimes making a guilty conscience to obtain them, will learn, perhaps, when it is too late, that it would have been better for him to *Mind his Business*.

The man who for popularity neglects his own affairs, and suffers them to go to ruin, certainly misses a figure when he neglects to *Mind his Business*.

The clergyman who would save the souls of the congregation intrusted to his charge, instead of busying himself with politics or

affairs of state, or making to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, should *Mind his proper Business*.

The physician who would stand well in a community must not be seen too often in a dram-shop, or at a frolic, at a horse-race, or a barbecue; but be ready, at all times, to do all the good he can by *Minding his Business*.

The shoemaker, tailor, wheelwright, or carpenter, who each promised you a job of work during a certain week, but, instead of going to work, went off to a squirrel-hunt, would each have made more money, and secured more custom, had he stuck to his bench, and *Minded his Business*.

You who are in office, high or low, the best thing you can do, if you wish to keep it, is to mind your business. And you who wish for office, let me tell you that it would be a great deal better for you, in the long run, to *Mind your Business*.

To the busy-body, the fault-finder, wherever they may be, and to the critic, who finds it easier to detect the faults of other people than to mend his own, I would say, in all mildness, *Mind your Business*.

And now, ladies, lest you might think that I intentionally neglect you in this connection, — for I know that, in all the best interests and pursuits of men, you have a controlling influence, and the greatest share in forming their characters for life, for good or evil, — permit me to say to you, in the language of respect and kindness, and I hope you will not take offence at it, be pleased to *Mind your Business*.

In short, my friends, *Mind your Business*, homely as the maxim is, may be well applied to every pursuit in life.

Mind your Business, you who would creep up to high stations; and be sure to mind your business, you who think yourselves up, lest you fall. *Mind your Business*, you that would be rich; and

you that are poor, if you would not be poorer still, *Mind your Business.*

To all, in whatever station placed, — the rich, the poor, the humble, the exalted, the proud, the lordly, the ambitious, young and old, male and female, in whatever condition or pursuit, in whatever station your lot is cast, — if you would succeed in life, if you would be loved and respected, if you would be happy, — remember this maxim, “*Mind your Business.*”

The more you think of it, the more you will like it ; the oftener you ponder over these three words, *Mind your Business*, the more you will find in them ; and the more you will learn to prize the simple maxim, because it embodies the secret of the success of every one in life, — the success of the WHOLE MAN.

And, my friends, I will here close the labors of the orator, quite content practically to apply my own advice, by MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS.

“ In the world’s broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle, —
Be a hero in the strife !

“ Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footsteps on the sands of time.

“ Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate ;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait ! ”

THE DIGNITY OF LABOR, AND THE TRUE POSITION OF THE MECHANIC.*

MECHANICS AND FRIENDS: The great object of living is to be useful,—useful to ourselves, to our neighbors, and to our country. In this spirit, my friends, I have accepted your call to the chair of this institution, and your invitation to be present on this occasion. My purpose is to offer some observations, in my plain way, upon a few of the many subjects interesting to the mechanic and truly practical man; and if anything that a *working-man* and *tanner* can say will be of service to you, you are heartily welcome to it. You will not expect, however, any flowery harangues or richly-turned periods from me; for most of you know that I have had, through life, a better acquaintance with matters of *fact* than of *fancy*; and I assure you that, while I have a high opinion of what is called oratory, as well as fine writing, I have a still higher opinion of what we plain mechanics sometimes call practical *common sense*,—I mean that sort of training and education which leads to practical, substantial results; which, instead of sending men through the world complaining of Providence, and laying plans and telling what they *mean* to do, actually put their shoulder to the wheel, and do something for their own good and the benefit of mankind. The gold of eloquence, or the silver of rhetoric, I have none; but such as I have, bring I unto you.

It has been sometimes said, my friends, that we mechanics have hard hands. Be it so; but no matter for that, so long as the

*An address delivered January 16, 1849, before the Mechanics' Institute of the city of New York.

heart is warm, and in the right place. Better is the man who has a hard hand than a hard heart. Better is he whose hand shows the marks of honest toil, but who has a sound, living, liberal heart within, than the man with soft and delicate palm, who has no heart at all, or, what is just as *bad*, a heart that is chilled by the love of gain, is miserly, ice-bound in all its objects, ungrateful to the Giver of all blessings, warmed by no sympathy for his fellow-man.

My friends, who is nature's nobleman? I am sure *you* will say, as *I* do, he is the *working-man*, who, with an honest heart, open hand, and cheerful face, meets you half way, with a hearty grasp, and with a soul that feels every word he says, and a countenance which displays the light of kindred feeling in the human heart. What is man, indeed, without a kindred feeling for his brother? A cold, marble-hearted image of death itself,—like the miser, withered by the icy hand of selfishness.

My friends, shall I ask you what constitutes the true wealth of this great country? You will answer, and you will answer truly, it is LABOR. Fix it how you will,—let who will live upon our bread and butter, beef and pork,—still labor lies at the foundation of all, and without it neither society nor civilization could exist. He who derides labor, or undervalues it, strikes at the order of nature, the foundation of society, at civilization, and at Christianity itself. Labor is the very gold of Ophir, the true intrinsic wealth of a nation. Yes, the hardy tillers of the soil are the foundation, and the industrious, working mechanics are the support, the builders, of our mighty fabric of national wealth, independence and happiness. I here repeat what I have often said, that the laboring men and mechanics of our country are the true bone and sinew of the land, the main-spring and support of the machine of government. They are, in truth, the creators of a nation's wealth; and would to God, my friends, that I could make you feel your real importance in the

community; that I could sufficiently impress upon your minds the conviction that you are, in our happy country at least, the great artificers of the national prosperity,—nay, the most important part and parcel of the government itself.

If the tyrant Louis XIV., in the glory of his most splendid reign, could utter, in the pride of his *borrowed* royalty, the sentence, “I am the state,” with how much more truth can we say, and how much more noble and true does it sound, when we, the people, say “*We* are the state” ! My friends, I wish you seriously to reflect upon this point, and to consider its bearings upon your own and the nation’s welfare. Where the mechanics are down-trodden and depressed, made hewers of wood and drawers of water to those who have robbed them of their rights, then such a monster as Louis, and other crowned heads, might *well* say, “I am the state;” but let labor be honored as it is here, let light be shed upon the great deeps of despotism as we now see it beginning to beam in Europe, and you will see the people there, as here, rising up in their majesty, and saying to their banished monarchs, “We are the state ! Let there be no more kings or queens !”

I maintain that the mechanic is not only the architect and builder of his own fortune, of society’s and of a nation’s prosperity, but that his is one of the most independent classes in the community. The professional man depends upon his mental gifts, or acquirements ; and when he fails, as he sometimes does, to gain the popular favor, or, by some sudden change, loses it, he is put to desperate shifts to earn a livelihood ; and not unfrequently, my friends, have you and I seen the crest-fallen lawyer, or proud statesman or politician, humbly suing for aid at the comfortable fire-side of the mechanic. I say, then, that the skilful artisan is an independent man ; for, place him in whatever part of the world you may, he can always secure his bread, because he is capable of doing something that is useful to his fellow-man. The story of

the two men cast away among savages is an apt illustration. One was a *gentleman*,—the other was a basket-maker. The basket-maker was well treated, because he could do something for himself; but the savages, in their simplicity, could not understand what a “gentleman” was,—and the basket-maker’s handiwork saved the poor gentleman from starving.

In the circles of false refinement, or where *true* refinement perhaps never dwells, you may hear the expression sometimes used, as if in derision or commiseration, “O, he is only a mechanic!” It may seem strange, but there are men, and women too, who can boast no other lineage themselves, and who, when told of this poor man’s misfortune, or that man’s sudden fall, pass over the matter with the cold remark of “He is only a mechanic — no matter. God help him,—he is only a mechanic.” God does help him, my friends! God helps those who help themselves; and I say it boldly here this day, that there are more happy, prosperous, ay, noble men, among the mechanics of this our land, than in any other class of equal numbers. “Only a mechanic!” Why, I remember there was a certain man called Felix, in the Scriptures. What his pedigree was, I do not know; but his countrymen were a proud race, and hated the mechanics. But one of these despised mechanics, a tent-maker, made this same Felix tremble. “Only a mechanic!” Why, Noah was a ship-wright, Solomon an architect. And who built the pyramids? who, the ancient cities whose ruins all the historians, philosophers and learned men of modern times, are unable to explain? The great temples of the holy city, Tyre and Sidon, Balbec, Persepolis, Babylon, Palmyra, Thebes, and other wondrous monuments of the east, whose magnificence no modern art can excel,—who built them? “O, it was only mechanics!”

In another place, and on a different occasion, I alluded to the impulse given to modern improvement, and the change wrought

upon the face of the whole world, by the invention of Faust, who gave light and knowledge to all mankind,—by the discoveries of Columbus, the science of Franklin, the ingenuity of Arkwright, the genius of Fulton and of Whitney,—mechanics, all,—ay, “nothing but mechanics.” I need not attempt to say what we owe, what this nation owes, what the civilized world owes, to these great men. All the improvements that were ever made by all the kings and emperors, and by all the artists, poets, philosophers and statesmen, that ever lived, you may pile up in one scale, and they are outweighed by the discoveries of Faust, Fulton and Whitney. And yet these men were “only mechanics!”

You have a right to be proud, my friends, and I certainly feel proud, that Franklin, and Fulton, and Whitney, all were countrymen of yours and mine, though they were “only mechanics.” I feel as if I could hold up my head proudly, when I can say that, young as we are as a nation, such is the free scope and tendency of our institutions, and of our glorious climate, to foster the full energies of the mind, and to produce the *whole man*, that, in all the useful mechanic arts, we are outstripping the nations of the Old World. In arts and in arms, and in every worldly pursuit of man, our advancement stands unequalled since the world began.

I saw a statement somewhere, not long since, whether true or false I know not, that the King of the Belgians refused to receive an ambassador from the French republic, because he was “only a mechanic.” He was a man of rank, to be sure,—had earned it by industry and integrity, and was honored at home, in regenerated France,—but, sad to relate, dreadful to think of, he was once a shoemaker at Brussels! Follies of this sort we might expect from the present race of kings; and it is no wonder that, as the artisans, the mechanics, the working-men, learn to think for themselves, and arise to assert their rights, the *crowned* heads take to their *heels*. Mechanics, my friends, have been tyrannized

over, for centuries, in Europe. Titled profligates, in church and state, have trodden them under their feet. To keep them from knowing their rights, it has ever been the policy of tyrants to keep the people in ignorance. To prevent their accumulation of the means of resistance, they have degraded labor, and absorbed its fruits. Our light, a great beacon raised on high, shines among the nations. We offer an asylum to the oppressed of all the earth. Millions of the toiling sons and daughters of Europe are now turning their eyes for safety, and seeking homes in our favored land; for the inevitable tendency of the institutions of the Old World is to drive the laboring and working classes to the New,—and, thank God, there is room enough for all.

Allow me to call your attention, for a moment, to the present condition of Great Britain, the most stable of any *European* monarchy. I find, from authentic statements, that the number of persons owning lands in England is thirty thousand, in Scotland three thousand, and Ireland six thousand,—only thirty-nine thousand in the whole,—leaving more than twenty-five millions of the population who do not own a single foot of God's creation. In 1780 — no further back than that — the number of landed proprietors was two hundred and fifty thousand; so you may see how rapidly all the lands in Great Britain are passing into the hands of the few,—into the hands of the nobles, and favorites of church and state. Here is a specimen of the landlord and tenant system; and it is one to which, perhaps, a little “anti-rent” and “free soil” leaven might well be applied, without harm. And I may add, in this connection, that, while *here*, in our country, every man has a voice in the government, and in the choice of his rulers, in England only one in nineteen is allowed the privilege of voting, in Scotland one in thirty, and in Ireland one in forty-three. Is it strange, then, that, under such institutions, where labor is degraded, and industry deprived of its reward,—

where the poorly-sheltered and poorly-fed millions are compelled to toil for landlords, priests and aristocrats,—is it strange that there should be misery and starvation, bloodshed, riots and revolutions? No; it would seem more strange if there were none. The truth is, the people cannot always remain down-trodden and oppressed. Their efforts during the year that has passed have excited your sympathy. The great God of battles will yet, we trust, crown their efforts with victory; and we may still hope to see our light shine across the ocean, and our great example pointing ever to the pole-star of liberty and happiness.

My friends, while reflecting upon the condition of other lands and climes, we should not be unmindful of the great blessings we *here* enjoy. As mechanics, as artisans and manufacturers, you are the creators of a *nation's* wealth, as well as your *own*. No odious task-master here can grasp the fruits of your industry. Your time is your own; your money is your own, for you have earned it, and you have a right to employ it in any lawful pursuit you please, and to enjoy it as you please. You can dwell in peace; you can worship where you will; there is no galling yoke of an established church upon your necks; and if your servants, the officers of government, state, national or local, abuse their trusts, and go contrary to your interests or wishes, you have the remedy in your own hands;—you can easily get rid of them, not by resorting to barricades and the cartridge-box, but by the never-failing remedy of the *ballot-box*.

But you have duties to perform, my friends, as citizens, neighbors, members of the great community of working and active men. Rome was not built in a day, nor can anything great or noble in human existence be accomplished without labor. It is the boast of the working-man that he can *do* what he *says*. You all remember the story of the two Athenians offering themselves for office. The one, an *eloquent* man, sought their votes with *promises* of

great things. He had done nothing for his country, but harangued the people long and loud on their rights, and what he *should* do for them. The other, a brave man, but of few words, arose and said, "All that this man *says*, I *do*." The man of *deeds*, rather than of *words*, was chosen. So with mechanics, my friends,—while the mushroom politician, the self-sufficient aristocrat, seeks to gain popularity with the people by promises and loud professions of honeyed words, the plain mechanic, the true working-man, goes forward and *accomplishes* what the other *promises*. He is a man of *deeds*, rather than of *words*. The mechanics of our country, active and intelligent as they are, may proudly hold up their heads as a body, and say boldly to the politicians and the orators of the day, "What you *promise*, we *do*." While making these observations, you will understand that I do not undervalue the occupation of the merchant or professional man, or any useful calling, — all being necessary in the great whole.

My friends, I see around me, in this great metropolis, destined to be the greatest in the world, evidences not only of what mechanics can do, but what they have done. Go through your streets of palaces, and there you will see what the mechanic has done. Go into your public edifices, your Exchange, your temples devoted to worship, and your halls of education, and there you will see the handiwork of the mechanic. Look into your banks, your city councils, and then abroad into your state and national legislatures, and you will see the mechanics duly represented. I may also say, that, in every department of society and of government, in public stations and private enterprises, you will invariably find that man the most useful, the most successful, the most illustrious and beloved, who early learned the lessons of labor, and to think for himself,—who was always *up* to his business, but never *above* it.

Before closing, I may, perhaps, be allowed to offer you a few words of advice. Allow me to say to apprentices, guardians, or

men employed in any and in all situations, make yourselves useful ; yes, make your *time*, your *talents*, so necessary, that your employer cannot do without you, and then will come a *price* equal to your earnings, or a partnership worth your having.

It belongs to you who would rise in the world, to mind your business, and remember that a man is known by his works as well as by the company he keeps ;—and I will add, I have never known a person regret being honest, frugal, industrious and prompt, a lover of order, and a respecter of the *Sabbath*. Young men are not apt to be conscious of what they are capable of doing. They are too often daunted by difficulties ; they see too many lions in the path. They do not task their faculties, nor improve as they ought the gifts that God has bestowed. Some are too diffident to succeed well in a world of strife. Others are too proud to ask advice, or to follow it when honestly given. More young men are ruined by false pride than by anything else, except laziness. Therefore, my young friends, be willing to be advised by those who have experience. Consult the wise and good, and profit by their examples. If you would succeed in life, let your motto be not only to look ahead, but go ahead ! Set your mark high, and strive to reach it. You can succeed, if you will. Remember, my young friends, the almost omnipotent power of perseverance, the power of industry and of labor. Remember, you who are just beginning the world, that fourteen or sixteen hours a day are sure to foot a good account, and seldom need an endorser.

You must remember, also, that “Order is Heaven’s first law,” and that the Scripture tells us to “Let everything be done decently and in order.” The man of method is generally a successful man. The neglect of this great principle has ruined its tens of thousands. An excellent rule is, “Let nothing be neglected this day.” I may add a good word, which is none the less true and useful because I have before said it,—a very plain and

simple maxim, in which any of you may find the important secret of success in life,—and that is, “Mind your business.” In whatever you undertake, pursue it steadily, if you wish to succeed; for, wherever there is a will, there is a way.

But do not be led away by the idea that property is the *only* thing necessary to your comfort and happiness. Remember that *worth* makes the man, and not *money*. Neglect your minds and your morals, and all the money in the world can neither make you happy, useful or honored. Remember, then, the advice of the wise man, and, “With all thy gettings, get understanding.” Bear in mind that the mechanic should educate his head, his hand, and his heart; he will thus learn to distinguish good from evil, to know how to supply his wants and add to his comforts, and how to dispense blessings to all around him.

In passing through your schools, and observing the young, eager and intelligent faces, it was a pleasing thought to fancy that I there beheld many who are destined hereafter to fill high posts of trust and honor; that from these would come your princely merchants, your aldermen, mayors, representatives, men of iron nerves, warm hearts, and clear heads, ready to compete for the highest places in pulpit, bar or forum, and even perhaps the highest office in the gift of a free people. Nor was a glance at the female department less satisfactory. Why may they not rank, by their industry, intelligence and virtue, among those whom America will be proud to number among her devoted and patriotic daughters?

I may add, in closing, that not for ourselves alone is the grand law of nature inscribed on all the Creator’s works; not for himself, but for others, does the sun dispense his beams; not for themselves alone do the clouds distil their showers, nor the teeming earth unlock her treasures. So, my brother mechanics, it is not for himself alone, but for others and for all, that the blessings of

God are so plentifully bestowed upon man. All that any of us can say is, that we are the almoners of God's bounty, and that we have duties to perform, not only for ourselves, but for the good of others, in order to fit us for happiness here or hereafter; for the man who lives only for himself is like a bleak and barren rock, desolate, fruitless, and worthless.

TEMPERANCE.*

FELLOW-CITIZENS: It gives me great pleasure to meet with you on the present occasion, and to lend my humble aid in the promotion of so good and glorious a cause.

And, although rather late in the day, allow me in the first place, ladies and gentlemen, to wish you all a *Happy New Year*.

In our late war with Mexico, the ladies with their fair fingers wove many of the colors which waved in the battle-field, and urged on our gallant countrymen to victory. But in this great *moral* conflict with intemperance, the daughters of our land have not contented themselves with *preparing* our banners, but, with woman's true devotion, they have stood by us in the fight.

And, now, the presence of the fairer portion of creation lightens our labors, and is indispensable to our success.

Of late, there has been much excitement, and great diversity of opinion, respecting the propriety of annexing new territory; but of the importance of taking *immediate* possession of the whole territory of Intemperance, all will agree.

But, to accomplish this, we must not stand still, — we must keep moving; for all nature teaches us this great lesson, ACTION! ACTION! ONWARD! ONWARD! Let our cold water army, then, advance boldly into the enemy's country, resolving that, whenever we meet the foe, we will *conquer*.

But, fellow-citizens, I have always been a strong lover of *system* in everything; and I would therefore respectfully suggest that to

* Address delivered to the Temperance Society at Prattsville, on taking the chair at their New Year's Meeting.

the various regiments shall be assigned particular duties. For instance, let the ministers of the Gospel, with the weapons of love, attack their opponents in the church. Let the lawyers dash manfully into the ranks of their legal brethren. Let the doctors attack the medical fraternity, — and so on with every trade and profession, — and, my word for it, we shall take more prisoners than we shall know where to accommodate.

The good book tells us that “of those to whom *much* is given, *much* will be required.”

With a country, then, blessed with a free government, with the finest climate in the world, and one which Providence has destined to favor the growth of the *whole man*; with natural scenery for variety and magnificence unsurpassed; where the fields teem with wealth, and the whole face of the land is covered with plenty; where are millions of gifted men, of untiring energy, and intelligence of the highest order; and with the smile of woman, too, ever ready to cheer the labors of the wise, and add flowers to the laurels of the brave, — how great is our responsibility! Thus preëminently favored by the goodness of the Creator, how sacred is our duty to take the *lead* in this great reform, and by our example proclaim to the whole world, “This is the way, — walk ye in it.”

In a great country like this, destined to be the largest upon the face of the earth, and into which the tide of emigration is continually pouring, it is our *especial* duty to take the lead, and, in the spirit of a lofty daring, to say, not “Go on,” but *Come on!*

Example is a living lesson. Every action has a tongue. Let us, then, show to the whole human race how great an amount of good can be accomplished by indomitable perseverance. And let us march onward, until the glorious news shall be borne on the lightning wings of the electric telegraph, from one end of the country to the other, that *Intemperance is no longer!*

But it is to *you*, reverend gentlemen, who are the moral stand-

ard-bearers of the country, that we must chiefly look, to lead the vast multitudes out of the modern Egypt, through the Red Sea of Intemperance; and, being unto them a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, to conduct them safely through the wilderness to the Promised Land.

But, my fellow-citizens, one of my strongest reasons for advocating this glorious cause is the rich blessings it will shed upon the home of the *laboring man*. The working classes are the real foundation of the prosperity of our country. They are the true bone and sinew of the land,—the real wealth.

Be it, therefore, our care to guard them from this greatest of all their enemies, Intemperance, which has so long robbed the poor man of the fruits of his labor, filled his household with sorrow, and multiplied widows and orphans through the land.

In the course of my life, I have, at various times, employed many thousand men; and I always found that the man who revered the Sabbath, and practised temperance, was the safest man to employ. I, therefore, ardently hope that the day is not far distant when this poisonous serpent shall no longer creep into the cottage of the laborer, to devour the fruits of his industry.

When Peter the Great, of Russia, desired to abolish the fashion of wearing long beards, he commenced by depriving the *rich* men and the *nobles* of the useless appendage; wisely observing, that the *poor* would give no trouble, as they would naturally imitate the rich. And, although in this country, thank God, we bow to the will of no man, this may serve as a hint to the wealthy.

Shall we, my friends, in the prosecution of this mighty enterprise, ask the aid of government? No! for we are the government. Shall we, then, to aid us in carrying out our principles, enforce the law? No; for, by our example, we will show that Temperance is wisdom; and that all her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace.

In a few years, my friends, we shall all have passed away. Let us, then, be up and doing, while life lasts. Let US DO WELL, leaving it for those who come after us to do better.

In conclusion, I would say to you, whose faith is equal to your works, let your prayers go up to Him who has said, "Ask, and ye shall receive," that he will bless this good work; and, in the power of his might, speedily cause the sin of Intemperance to cease from the land. For, as I look around upon this intelligent audience, I am sure there is not one who with me will not respond to the sentiment that, with Heaven on our side, we have nothing to fear; and who, with a voice of joyful enthusiasm, will not exclaim, "*If God be for us, who can be against us?*"

ACT WELL YOUR PART.*

“Honor and shame from no condition rise ;
Act well your part, — there all the honor lies.”

GENTLEMEN : The couplet of the poet, though conveying what may be deemed an obvious truth, is full of wise meaning, which nothing but long and close study of the life of man could have suggested ; and yet that study was not, in his case, in the company of men who, like you and me, were accustomed to toil, corporeally and mentally, for ourselves and others. His was the knowledge of facts, in the circumstances of those around him, whose vocations he had known, and whose progress to honor and fame he had witnessed : but he never smote the heated bar on the anvil, or guided the share through the furrow, or threw the shuttle for the weaver's beam. He never applied chemistry to the arts and manufactures, or tested its agencies in mechanic life.

That he wrought industriously with his pen,—that powerful instrument for good or ill,—there is no doubt ; and, as mind is superior to matter, his labors may have been—and, as is generally believed, were—useful to the literary world ; but as a useful citizen, blending physical with mental labor, he could not compare with thousands of his day and of ours, of less acute and less cultivated intellect. Hence it is that he was the mere chronicler of a fact, but could not say, as an ancient poet made one of his heroes say,

“*All which I saw, and most of which I was.*”

He was no part of the mechanic age in which he lived ; but he

* An address prepared for delivery before the Mechanic's Society, Baltimore, Maryland, 1851 ; but not delivered, on account of illness.

states a fact honorable to our nature, and undisputably true, — true in his day and country, and true in our day and country, — true in a monarchy, and true in a republic.

Painters as well as poets, tanners as well as historians, the inventors of cotton-gins and spinning-jennies as well as statesmen, soldiers as well as generals, have been elevated to distinction by the fact of their having “acted well” their several parts; and it was no empty boast of the Roman general, *Marinus*, who rose from obscurity to the Consulate, that, if the patricians despised his mean birth, he despised their mean actions; — that he could show the spoils which he himself had taken from the vanquished, and could point to his honorable scars won in seas of blood and scenes of action, where those effeminate patricians dared not to show their faces. He *acted well his part* as a soldier and general, and consul of Rome.

The world, even the lazy and idle world, admire industry, and enterprise, and courage, and fortitude, and patience; and, without pausing to ask whence they spring, they ask who possesses them, and him they honor.

In monarchies, the sovereign head of the state, the theoretical fountain of all honor, calls to distinction, and ennobles, by rank, all, of every vocation, however humble their origin, who render special service to the country; and, in our country, where the government rarely rewards merit or honors industry, *the people*, the true sovereigns, never fail to mark with their approbation the man who *acts well his part*. They never fail either to discover or appreciate, or to recompense by their favor, him who faithfully serves his fellow-countrymen.

Our glorious constitution, framed by sages unsurpassed by the great men of any age, puts up no bars against the advancement of our citizens, either on account of their religion, their birth-place, their poverty, or their occupation. It matters not, in

this free land, whether a man be a judge or a ploughman; whether he ministers in the temples of religion, labors in the smithy, or assuages the "ills that flesh is heir to" by his medical skill,—prevents disease by fashioning leather to exclude the wet and cold from the feet, or weaves fabrics for the protection of the rest of the body,—each is honored, respected, and compensated, in his respective vocation, if he evinces his fitness for it, if he *acts well his part*.

It may be said that popular applause is not worth having, and that "*instability*" is written on every record of public favor; but there is, inherent in the heart of every one worthy the name of man,—fit to live here, and be immortal hereafter,—there is "a divinity that stirs within,"—call it conscience, or call it what we may,—that does, sooner or later, control the actions of all men, and render them desirous of having it said of each, "*He acted well his part.*"

This divinity is worthy of all adoration. It whispers courage to the faint and weary; it gives strength to the feeble, perseverance to the flagging, hope to the discouraged, victory and triumph to the self-denying and indefatigable. It stimulates, invigorates, cheers all, from the highest to the lowest, to press on, to surpass cotemporaries, and to distance progenitors in the march of human improvement in the attainment of human excellence, in approximating to that perfection which is to be hereafter.

This inward friend of man teaches him that, whatever may be the advantages of some in wealth, in social or political position, others, without the advantages of birth, or station, or position, in the great race of life, may, by application,—by the right use of the thews and sinews, the heart and mind, with which they are endowed,—overtake the best-trained courser, and, if not pass him at the goal, come out full-breathed and in time, and prove that he *has acted well his part*.

That wealth and position are important auxiliaries to every one who aspires to contribute to human happiness, is undeniable; but they are not indispensable essentials. He who is resolved to succeed is not intimidated by opponents, discouraged by repeated failures, deterred by obstacles, daunted by dangers, terrified by the wastes and forests through which he must pass, nor rendered desperate by reverses. If his wagon is stalled, he puts his shoulder to the wheel; if he cannot ride, he will walk; if the winds whistle and the tempests roar, he waits the lulling of the storm. If the deluge of unpopularity threatens to engulf him, he breasts himself to the shock, and becomes immovable as "the everlasting hills" in his purpose. *He will act well his part.*

It is of little moment in what business we may engage, if it be honest and useful; what art we may cultivate, what science explore, what labor achieve; the manifest duty of man is to pursue steadily, honestly, soberly and actively, whatever he undertakes.

Not content to reach as far as others have reached, we must strive to surpass them in one or every particular of their attainments. This may often be done by the light of day; but, in case of need, the midnight oil must be burned, rest must be abridged, and the cravings of appetite but partially appeased. In the sweat of our brow must we earn even our bread. What must we not suffer, if we would teach others how to earn their bread, or if we would earn bread for the helpless!

What must we not do, if we mean to live not for ourselves only, but for our kindred, our country, our race! What not do, if we would have it said of us while living, and recorded of us when dead, that we *acted well our parts!*

The century in which we live is the most remarkable in the annals of the world. We have witnessed greater moral and political revolutions, greater advances in arts and science, greater dis-

coveries of agents to carry out the designs of an all-wise Creator, greater progress in all that elevates our nature above all that is base towards all that is superhuman,—greater progress than the generations of any by-gone age; and yet we seem to be but in the infancy of our mental capabilities.

The inventions and discoveries and mechanical contrivances of yesterday are to-day eclipsed by some new light, which may, in its turn, be paled to-morrow. The *lightning* which Franklin coaxed from the clouds is to-day compelled to span the globe on electric wires. *Steam*, which Fulton could scarce command to propel a boat four miles per hour, is now hissing at sceptics from engines wheeling through space at the rate of a mile per minute; and the upper air, which was but lately the medium through which toy-balloons sailed like bubbles, for the amusement of the world's big children, is to-day seriously thought of as an atmosphere for a silken eagle, whose flight is to reach the very eye, almost, of the sun; or, poising itself in mid-air, and folding its wings at will, may rest on any spot to which it may stoop, as the world revolves on its axis, and reäscend, until the very antipodes shall change position, again to stoop at will to the earth. Thus, air, fire and water, elements alike of animal and vegetable life, are becoming almost omnipotent in the hands of “man, whose breath is in his nostrils.”

But, if the great agents are so powerful, how various are the purposes to which they may be made subservient! What new combinations are yet to come! “Through what varieties of untried being” must they pass! How many thousands are yet to *act well their parts*, before the full purpose of man's creation shall have been accomplished! Shall all the new lights of science be extinguished? Will there be any more “dark ages”? Will mental chaos and moral despotism again visit the world? These

are questions, but they should be ejaculations only in praise of Him "whose ways are past finding out."

As new combinations of power are brought into use, new generations of those who apply them are born; and the lights of science having illuminated successive communities, and what was the dawn in the past century having become the perfect day in ours, men look behind and around them at what has been done, and before them at what is yet to be accomplished, and take a start at the point at which their predecessors halted. The survey gives courage and hope, while it shows that labor is not to be less than heretofore, if progress is to be made.

The fact that harvest follows planting, and that he who sows will reap, stimulates every new hand in the world's great labor-field; and although a few may faint, the masses will still toil on. Though mildew, and blight, and storm, may injure a first or second crop, yet the law of our nature is toil; and they who are in the field will remain there, amid disappointments and losses, so that, whatever may be the result, it shall be manifest that they have *acted well their parts*.

The school-boy may whimper for the loss of his dinner-basket, at the end of his weary tramp to the distant school-house; but *man*, whatever be his loss, has no right to murmur at deprivations, so long as the world is before him. His energies are god-like, and should never be suffered to flag. Self-confiding and self-relying man can perform miracles; and many a one I know who never had the lore of the schools, the degrees of a college, or a license from a bench of judges, but who has built for himself a fame of which the proudest might be proud. This is the result of the nature of our institutions, and the character of our laws, all based on equal privileges, permitting no exclusiveness. We have no claims here founded on the accidents of birth or of ancestral fame; no hereditary title, but that of merit; and yet we have seen

the career of some of our untitled citizens so brilliant, amid the surrounding gloom of disappointment and discouragement, that the older nations of the east are fast coming to the conclusion that their sun has set, and that the day-spring of political liberty and human progress is soon to eclipse, in this hemisphere, all that monarchies ever saw or dreamed. Already, they who scoffed at our Herculean infancy stand amazed at our manhood; and the thirteen rebellious *colonies* of Great Britain are now consolidated into the "*Model Republic*."

25*

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE FAIR OF
THE GREENE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL
SOCIETY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1845.*

GENTLEMEN: You have chosen for your president one who does not boast the graces of eloquence ; and you cannot, and do not, expect from him, on this occasion, a display of fine words and happy fancies, but rather a plain statement of true and practical ideas. You are working-men, and you have chosen a working-man ; and it is on this account that your choice confers honor upon me. It was in Congress, where my strength has always been given to the protection and advancement of American labor, that I heard of this new evidence of your kindness and confidence ; and I thank you for it, and for thus affording me another opportunity, and a more honorable place than the halls of legislation, to express my high sense of the dignity of those occupations the interests of which this society is so happily designed to promote. I need not say, to those who know me, that through life I have practised and encouraged industry, and exerted my influence, in every sphere (according to my ability), in promoting the true welfare of my fellow-men. I have acted upon the principle, and so have you, that it is not mere physical or mental structure that makes the man in the best sense of the word, but the mode of life. It is not to have a head, a heart, an arm, a human body and soul, that makes one worthy of so noble a name ; but to give the wisdom of that head, the strength of that arm, the combined energy of all the powers, to constant and useful industry. The hard-working farmers and mechanics of our country are its glory and strength. Their labors

* At the time this address was delivered, Colonel Pratt was president of the society.

have produced wealth ; their honesty, their patriotism, and faithfulness to the institutions of liberty, have given our land its standing among nations ; and, in times of danger, their strong arms and firm hearts are its safeguard. He is not the Lord of the soil who calls so many acres his own, yet has no power to use them ; but he, rather, who ploughs, and sows, and reaps, and scatters abroad over the country, the products of the glorious harvest, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. He is not master of earth's treasures who has the bare title to a mine ; but rather he whose skill and industry raise the ore, reduce the metal, mould it into countless shapes of usefulness, and set to work the gigantic engine with its thousand hands. Farmers and mechanics, if faithful to their duties, are men in the full meaning of the word, — useful men, men that the world cannot do without. Their occupations develop all the faculties, and produce “sound minds in sound bodies ;” they accustom men to rely on their own strength, to love labor, and to feel that independence of other men, and that contempt for little difficulties, which are the foundation of true greatness of mind.

These, fellow working-men, are the occupations, this is the land, ours the institutions, and our fathers the stock, which have produced the noblest race now living ; and, if we value and use our privilege aright, we shall yet exhibit human nature in its highest degree of perfection. We have resources and advantages possessed by no other nation ; and a people better fitted than any other to develop those resources and improve those advantages. We need little aid from abroad, for we have everything at home ; we need little teaching from strangers, for we know best what is best for ourselves. According to my observation, farmers are too easily persuaded to look to other states and countries for the means of increasing the products of their fields, and improving their flocks and herds. We are not in England, nor at the north, nor at the south ; and neither English, northern, or southern improvements,

are what we want. We want improvements of our own, suited to our own wants and position, such as none can make for us as well as we can make them for ourselves. Is it not better, as a general principle, both as to animals and vegetables, to choose and improve the best of such as are already adapted to our climate and soil, than to be shifting and changing, in the vain hope of arriving by some short cut at such results as God intended we should accomplish only by close attention and the sweat of our brows?

Of all the animals created for the use of man, none has been the subject of so much observation and esteem as the horse. In their native wilds, nature forms them into herds and groups, and gives them in command of the strongest and fleetest; and, by this and other wise arrangements, of which only God is capable, guards the species against general degeneracy. The same kind care has been shown in special provision for the security of every race of animals; but, when this security is taken away, and they are brought under the dominion and management of man, the most skilful attention is required in changing the general character of the species, and producing and improving distinct breeds, each adapted to its own specific purpose. It is not every breed that is suited to every locality; for climate, and the face and food of different countries, will modify the shapes and qualities, not only of the domestic animals, but of the human species. The raw-boned, industrious, hardy and temperate man of the north becomes enervated and indolent, both in the mental and physical constitution and energies, in tropical latitudes, where he reposes in the lap of luxury, enjoying, without exertion, the abundance which nature lavishes around him.

The horse best fitted to travel in the sun and sands of the south is the descendant of the small, hard-boned, light-footed Arabian, with his high courage and silken coat; while grain-growing Pennsylvania and Ohio, with their cumbrous wagons, prefer to

use a heavy corn-fed breed, that will throw a greater weight upon the collar. The north, again, is better served by a more compact and active race of middle size, endowed with much more strength in proportion to their weight, and greater powers of endurance; who bravely champ the bit, and nobly strain to the load, with lion-like vigor; rejoicing at toil, and answering to the driver's voice with proud step and martial air, as if it was the trumpet calling them to battle. Thus the wants and peculiarities, the soil, climate and uses, of each district, require and produce that peculiar breed which is best suited to itself. What better stock do we need than such as can be bred from the best of those we already have? The teams of Z. Pratt & Co., composed of a single span (natives of our own region), are in the habit of drawing from Catskill, over the mountains, to Prattsville, and back, loads of hides and leather of from thirty to fifty, and even sixty hundred weight each, the wagon or sleigh not included, the distance being thirty-seven miles, and requiring three days to go and come.

The quantity thus transported within the year is nearly two and a half millions of pounds; and the expenses the last season, including all risks and charges, was only thirteen cents a hundred. During twenty years of this service, which I make bold to assert has not been equalled by horses of any other district or county on the globe, not a horse has been injured, in the hands of a careful driver; and, to the honor of the county be it said, that we have never lost a hide or a side of leather, of the million and one half thus transported.

I am aware that there are those, and among them my friend, Mr. Skinner, the experienced editor of the Farmer's Library, who have strongly recommended mules for slow and constant work, on the ground of much longer life, greater exemption from accident and disease, and more economy in feeding; but experience, the best of teachers, seems to show that the mule and the slave are

destined to work together in the sunny south ; both are incongenial to us and our latitude.

The horse which we have is just the kind that we need ; and if we pay proper attention, in breeding, to the selection of both sire and dam, we shall soon have, of our own raising, a class of animals that for our purposes cannot be excelled. Already, indeed, two of the most celebrated trotters the country ever saw have been raised in our immediate neighborhood. We do not want such horses as roam half wild over the pampas of South America. They are small, light, active, always on the gallop, and admirably fitted to chase the ostrich over the sand, or the ox through the tangled grass ; but, when put to severe tests, they are found wanting in strength, power of enduring fatigue, and even fleetness. Neither do we want the English dray horse, which represents the other extreme. He is large and strong, like the ox, and, like him, too, sluggish, heavy and unwieldy.

The requisite vigor and spirit are not to be looked for in overgrown size and fatness in the horse, any more than in the man : animation that insures perseverance, the muscle that gives activity, and that ardor and ambition which never permit them to look back and balk, are what is wanting in both.

What I have said as to the improvement of horses on the foundation of our native stock, applies with equal force to cattle.

In every settlement, a stock of good cattle is of the highest importance ; and every sagacious farmer will learn to choose for breeders such as promise best for his particular object, whether it be butter, beef, cheese or labor ; and he should study this subject with a deep feeling of scientific interest, as well as for the sake of gain. Let his first care be to put aside the very best progeny of his stock, and never permit his dearest friend to cast a wistful eye on them, and never be tempted by any price to sacrifice them to the butcher's knife. If he has a favorite cow, of the real fill-pail

breed, let him reserve and turn out that one of her calves which most resembles herself, before it grows old enough to be sold to the butcher, and always guard it with special care.

We read of premiums being given to large imported cows, that have yielded some thirty quarts a day; but every dairy-woman will tell you that it is not the cow that gives the largest quantity at a milking that makes the best one in the long run. A better one still is she that keeps on through the year, giving milk for your dairy, and cream for your table, in winter as well as summer, let the feed be short or long. Run-fast is a good name, but hold-fast is a better one.

In the agricultural journals I have read an account of a middle-sized country cow. I refer to the celebrated Oakes cow, bought out of a drove in Massachusetts for a mere trifle. Her history illustrates two things worthy of note: First, what we can obtain from the best of our old breed; and, secondly, how much depends on good feeding. And just as it was with the Oakes cow, so will every man find it with his farm. If he won't feed his farm, and that often and well, he need not expect it long to feed him. Always taking out of the meal-tub, and never putting in, will soon come to the bottom, as Poor Richard says. But, to return to the Oakes cow, that did so much honor to the name of Caleb Oakes; it is stated on the most unquestionable authority, such as satisfied the Massachusetts Agricultural Society, that in the first year, with ordinary keeping, she made but one hundred and eighty pounds of butter; the next year, she had twelve bushels of corn-meal, and then gave three hundred pounds of butter; the next, thirty-five bushels, and she gave more than four hundred pounds; the next year she had a bushel of meal a week, and all her own milk skimmed, and then she gave, from the fifth of April to the twenty-fifth of September, the day of the show, four hundred and eighty-four pounds, besides suckling her calf for five weeks. She was

exhibited, and deservedly took the premium on the last-mentioned day; and will carry down her owner's name, with credit, to posterity, as long as oaks grow.

After all, my friends, in respect to cattle, the true question is, not what breed can be made the heaviest, if stuffed with food, as in some counties they stuff geese and turkeys, until no more can be crammed down their throats; but what breed, according to our locality and objects, will do the most work, or yield the greatest weight of milk, butter, cheese, or beef, as the case may be, from the food at our command. In cold, mountainous districts, says a writer of high authority, it is necessary to restrain, within certain limits, the ambition of having highly improved stock. In such circumstances, the grand point is to have a hardy race, not over nice in its food, which consists, through a considerable portion of the year, of but short and coarse herbage. The best milch cow, generally, as every good dairy-woman will tell you, is the one that, while she is at the pail, turns everything into milk, and is least disposed to *be* or to look fat.

The same considerations that apply to breeding domestic animals apply also to vegetables and grain. We cannot contradict nature; but we can coöperate with her, and, working in her methods and in conformity to her laws, produce all the results that the Creator ever designed to put within our reach. A man passing, a few years ago, by a field of ripe wheat on Long Island, was struck by the rich appearance of two or three heads that grew near the road, and hung down as if the grain was of great weight. He stopped and plucked those heads, and sowed them the next season in a place by themselves, and so cultivated them year after year, till they had increased to over a hundred bushels, that, for color, weight, and uniform plumpness of the kernels, are, perhaps, not surpassed in the country; at least, they are expected to take the premium at the approaching fair of the American Institute. This

shows what we should do, if we wish to carry out nature's plans, and finish what she has begun. The very best specimens should be chosen from those that have been grown on our own or on a neighboring farm, instead of sending to a distance for such as, when we get them, will be forced, by the irreversible laws of soil and climate, to change their character, and adapt themselves to their new locality. The high-scented Cuba tobacco loses its flavor on being transplanted to other countries. So the eight-rowed Dutton corn of the north refuses to exchange localities with the ground seed of James river. Wheat, too, changes its character, and cannot be transferred from one climate to another without losing its original color and other characteristics. As well might you attempt to transplant the beautiful hemlock of our mountains, where the God of nature placed it, to regions designed for the live oak and the olive, as to neglect the peculiar varieties of grain that our own region produces in perfection, and cultivate those whose distinctive properties are the result of a different soil and climate.

Therefore, let me urge upon you to hold on upon what you have proved to be good. Choose always the best of its kind in the animal and vegetable departments, and depend on your own clear heads and strong arms for the rest. You are in the very middle region between the extreme rigors of the north and the enervating heat of the south; in the finest climate that the sun ever shone upon; and, of all positions, the one best adapted to develop the human faculties and to bring forth the noblest displays of mental and physical energy, and, in a word, to rear the whole man. Rely, then, on yourselves to do your own work, to make your own laws, to improve your own animals and agricultural products, and to pursue, on all subjects, those investigations, and make those discoveries and arrangements, which your own interests require. Bring up your children to respect the character and to love the labors of the farmer and the mechanic; for on them, at last, as I before

said, does every country depend for support in peace, and defence in war. Who does the world pronounce the greatest man that ever headed patriot armies in defence of freedom, in ancient or in modern times? Was not Washington a farmer?—he whose fame will be as eternal as our own Catskill Mountains!

“Great Cincinnatus at the plough with greater glory shone
Than guilty Caesar e’er could do, though seated on a throne!”

And again; — among all the benefactors of American industry, who have contributed most to promote our national wealth and honor? With pride let me name two brother mechanics, Whitney and Fulton!

Let us, gentlemen, follow these bright examples; let us study to inform our minds and improve and enlarge our hearts; and then we shall not only know how to increase our crops, and improve our fortunes, but how, at the same time, to benefit our country and our race.

Washington was great in war, but greater still in peace. He presided, with unsurpassed wisdom and dignity, over the affairs of state, but added increased lustre to both by the calm contentment of Mount Vernon. Every farmer cannot expect to occupy so high a position, or gain so much applause; but every one ought, in his own sphere, to practise the same strict integrity and faithful performance of duty, and be, in his principles and conduct, a Washington, possessing the same virtues, though he may never have the same glorious opportunity to exemplify them. Every mechanic cannot expect to make so useful discoveries as the steam-boat and cotton-gin; yet every one can and ought to acquaint himself with all the mysteries of his art, and give diligence to make himself as capable, and his work as nearly perfect, as possible, and thus do all that Whitney or Fulton would have done in his place.

I rejoice to be able to say, not only that this is the course our farmers and mechanics ought to pursue, but also that, to a great extent, they are pursuing it now. The formation of this and other like associations, and the variety and standard worth of the many periodicals which are devoted to agriculture and the mechanic arts, show the spirit of our people. The benefit which the country receives, on account of the free interchange of thought, and general diffusion of intelligence, through these channels, is incalculable. An intelligent and well-informed gentleman from the south once asserted that, through the influence of the *Albany Cultivator* alone, the wealth of that part of the country had been increased more than two millions of dollars.

Before I close these remarks, let me suggest — being myself a father, with some opportunities of observation — that you should incline your sons, above all things, to prize that honest station, however humble, which is gained by personal industry, and enjoyed without dependence on the capricious breath of party, or of any mortal man in power.

Any honest pursuit will be esteemed, by a young man of independent spirit and honorable ambition, in preference to being seen lounging in the ante-chambers of public departments and the lobbies of the capitol, a suppliant for the precarious emoluments of office. Let it ever be deemed a high honor to be qualified to serve the people; but, when you see your son, made in the image of his God, inclined to quit the handles of his plough, or throw down his hammer, and sell his birth-right for a mess of pottage, put into his hands the homely fable of the dog and the wolf, which inculcates the love of independence as a boon above all price.

It is the independent spirit of our people that ranks them above all other nations of the earth; because each man has, in himself, the ability and resolution to accomplish his ends of and by himself. It is on this account that an American may be cast penniless and

alone in any corner of the earth, and amongst any people, and, instead of wasting his life out, a poor and despised stranger, he will summon his energies, and bear himself like a conqueror. Whatever the natives are doing, he does better than they; he makes the most money, exerts the most influence, and soon becomes a leader and a prince among them; from soling a shoe to heading an army, he shows himself in all things capable, in all things superior; and, having accumulated sufficient fortune for himself, and honor for his country abroad, he returns to lay at her feet the spoils of other lands, and enjoy in his native home the society of equals. What does such a man want of official patronage or protection? He scorns to eat the bread he has not earned, or to enjoy honors he has not deserved.

I should give, however, but half the praise that is due to my countrymen, did I not add, that, remarkable as they are for independence of spirit and ability to take care of themselves, they are equally distinguished for benevolence, true politeness, and a liberal and enlightened regard for the best interests of others. Nowhere on the globe are women treated with more tenderness and respect, and nowhere are they more worthy of it. It is, indeed, under the gentle and kindly influence of mothers, sisters, and wives, that the best points of our national character have been formed; and who would not yield to that influence? If men have all the strength, women have all the loveliness. Strength is needed to protect loveliness, and loveliness is equally needed to adorn strength. Depend upon it, the young man who pretends to despise the society of virtuous females does so because his conscience tells him, secretly, he is unworthy of it.

Intending always to practise what I preach, it has been with me a matter of pride to appear before you to-day clothed in the produce of manufacture of our own country. With the labors of our own husbandmen, and the skill of our own mechanics, no man needs

to send abroad for subsistence or clothing. For my own part, so fully am I impressed with the importance of looking for comfort and happiness within ourselves, that I would have the very children in our schools taught to sing the old song, which says :

“ I ’ll eat my own ham,
My own chicken and lamb, —
I ’ll shear my own fleece, and I ’ll wear it.”

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HISTORICAL STATISTICS OF GREENE CO. AND PRATTSVILLE,* N. Y.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: It gives me great pleasure to meet with you on this interesting occasion, "to rejoice with those who do rejoice." It cheers my heart to see so large a gathering of the hardy tillers of the soil, each one looking a lord of creation, honest-hearted and upright,—not only the man, but the better-half also, with the sons and daughters of home industry and inherent independence. I speak it proudly; I have never stood before a more substantial and intelligent audience, although I have travelled all over the United States. I bear this witness cheerfully, for it is your due.

As your speaker has alluded to the tanner, it should seem that I cannot do less than to state how useful he has been to the farmer, or, rather, what he has done for the farmer; and, if I may be allowed to say so, it is a law of providence that he who worketh for himself wisely worketh for mankind. When I first came among you, nearly fifty years ago, through dark hemlocks and bad roads, with but few inhabitants, my parents settled in that part of Windham which is now called Lexington. They taught me to go to the then only meeting-house in town, over two and a half miles, on foot, every Sabbath, and it was before I had tanned enough leather to wear. These early Sabbath exercises on foot gave me a good constitution, kept me out of mischief, and secured my attention to those serious and sacred subjects which concern and interest us all, both here and hereafter. Blessed are the

* An address delivered at Greene County Agricultural Fair, Windham, N. Y., Sept. 25, 1850.

barefooted boys who are seen going up to the Sabbath-schools; for out of such will come the rulers and law-makers of a free and Christian people. I thus learned early to think and act for myself; and this thinking for yourselves will hurt none of you, my young hearers.

There were then about fifteen hundred inhabitants in one town,—since divided into six towns,—and now numbering nearly ten thousand of the most hardy, honest and industrious inhabitants on the globe. Who would not be proud of such a people, and covet them as neighbors?

I see here some of those early pioneers, who had to back grain twenty miles to the grist-mill, to support their families, after having worked at low wages to earn it. Some made maple-sugar, and carried it from fifteen to thirty miles, to exchange it for corn, pork, and potatoes. They could not buy on credit. So poor was old Windham in her infancy!

But now look around, and behold one hundred pairs of oxen come from these towns to this fair,—and they will compare favorably with those exhibited at the state fair at Albany. We have here in view all the substantial evidences of our abundant prosperity, resulting from the free and enlightened government of an intelligent and enterprising people, whose moral and religious principles can be vouched for by the ministers of the Gospel. For one meeting-house then, we now number twenty; and from the then despised hemlock-forest have arisen beautiful towns, splendid villages, and princely farmers, who have reared cheerful households of smiling daughters, who must inevitably become the “better-half” hereafter to a still more affluent and intelligent community. To you, daughters, who now grace this fair by your presence, after having adorned and embellished it with your works of taste, skill and industry, will be committed the destinies of a new generation; and to your purifying and refining powers will

they be indebted, as we are to our mothers, for all that is exalted and ennobling in man, and for all that is pure and of good report among men. Without your cheering smiles and presence here, we should be thrown back to the dismal and dreary shades of the hemlocks.

And now I will show you the advantages these dreary hemlocks have been to the farmers of our mountain towns. Since I first engaged in farming, it has been my lot to employ over fifteen thousand years of other men's labor; an army of over thirty thousand men have I employed, and I have paid those men for their labor alone over two millions five hundred thousand dollars. I have cleared above ten thousand acres of land, used above two hundred thousand cords of hemlock bark, and paid above half a million of dollars for it. I have used and worn out five hundred horses and one thousand oxen; used two hundred thousand bushels of oats, one hundred and twenty thousand tons of hay, thirty thousand barrels of beef and pork, and nearly one hundred thousand barrels of flour, and potatoes without number or measure.

I have tanned one million two hundred and fifty thousand sides of leather, stock enough to furnish every citizen of the United States, at the present time, with a pair of shoes. My daily disbursements are over five thousand dollars per day; and I have used in my business here above ten millions of dollars. Every laborer received his money, yea, every man his penny, in peace; and, to the credit of this community be it said, that I never had a side of leather stolen, and was never defendant at law, on account of any business transactions, during my residence among you. The great object of living is to be useful. Live with your neighbor, and not on him. Allow me, gentlemen and ladies, to conclude by congratulating you upon the rich blessings of health, peace and prosperity, which surround you; and may succeeding generations

do as much as you have done towards national wealth and industry, which are the safeguards of our independence.

In the evening of my days, I have no ambition but to render what I have done available for our mutual happiness. Our confidence has been mutual,—our growth identical. Our sympathies have been blended upon a common altar, and the actuating motives of each have been the motives of all. I have claimed no exemption from the ordinary lot of humanity;—I ask none now. I look and hope for a participation in the quiet comforts of life, which I desire to see possessed by you all; and you will, I trust, appreciate my deliberate choice, when I assure you that there is no seat more inviting to my grateful heart than the mossy mound to be found under my favorite hemlock-tree. To me that tree has a beauty which I fail to discover in all others. It has not only sheltered me with a refreshing shade, but has proved to be a source of wealth to all whose industry has been identified with its properties and uses.*

* A vote of thanks was passed, amid the general joy and rejoicing of Colonel Pratt's friends and neighbors, numbering over four thousand persons.

MISCELLANEOUS.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRATTSVILLE TANNERY.

PRATTSVILLE, GREENE CO., N. Y., }
November 27, 1847. }

T. B. WAKEMAN, Esq., *Sec'y of the American Institute, N. Y.*

DEAR SIR: Having been honored by the American Institute with a medal for the best sample of hemlock-tanned sole-leather, in compliance with your request, I have drawn up a brief but comprehensive account of the processes and extent of the manufactures carried on at my establishment in Prattsville, together with several tabular statements, designed to illustrate its importance as an industrial pursuit.

As I have worked and talked about the business for many years, and love to do so still, I know not how a mechanic can answer, except by stating *what he did*, and *how he did*. I am aware that, through you, I am addressing the State of New York, whose chief commercial city imports a greater number of hides, and carries on a more extensive trade in leather, than any other city in the world. In this cold clime, every one must realize that, next to food and raiment, leather is the *sole* for man. The improvements which I have made, from time to time, in this branch of business, have been the result of experience; and demonstrate satisfactorily, to my own mind, that, however important are the discoveries of

science, they would be of little value, without that practice which must ever prove the ultimate test of utility, and the sure talisman of success.

Throughout the whole world, American enterprise has become a proverb. Go where you will, from the ice-bound north to the regions of the torrid zone, in any path where civilized man has ever trod, upon the land or the sea, and you will not fail to encounter evidences of the peculiar genius of our people. You will find their adventurous enterprise pushing itself into every nook and corner of the globe, where the materials and opportunities of commerce may be found, or industry may hope for reward. Nor is this spirit impelled by the pressure of any general poverty or want of employment at home, which bears so heavily upon some of the European nations; but it is nourished by a natural love of independence, harmonizing with the theory of our own institutions,—by a sense of self-reliance and the hope of fortune, which more or less actuates every individual. It is a spirit of progress, the spirit of the age, in which our country seems destined by Providence to take the lead.

But it is at home that the workings of American enterprise are to be seen on the grandest scale. Here, untrammelled by ancient customs, uncurbed by despotic institutions or royal monopolies, the American artisan finds a fair field for the exercise of his powers. His talents and energies are ever in a state of productive activity.

He wills, he invents, he toils. Cities arise in the wilderness; the habitations of man take the places of the huts of the savage; and the wheat-fields move their yellow ears where, but a few months before, stood the beautiful ever-green hemlock of the forest. It need not be denied that the American, in all this, is mainly actuated by the selfish principle,—the desire of gain,—which is the very life of commerce and enterprise; but we do maintain that the pursuit of money here is dignified, as it is nowhere else, by a

sense of the vast ultimate effects of industrial causes upon the destiny of the country. The American feels that he is working, not for himself alone, but in furtherance of the glorious experiment of building up a free people, whose protecting shield may yet cover the whole continent. His natural pride partakes of this peculiar sentiment of expansiveness, the grand feature of the country and climate; and he glories not only in his country as it is, but he looks forward to a future which he may almost hope to see realized, when the valley of the Hudson shall contain its millions of people, and when the cities and towns of the Pacific, by way of the great pass of the Rocky Mountains, the Oregon Railroad, and the Hudson, shall seek a market for their treasures in the emporium of North America.

It would be a curious subject of speculation to inquire into the causes that have conspired to mark the American people with such an extraordinary degree of enterprise; but such an inquiry would lead me altogether too far from the immediate object of the information which you desire. I shall therefore proceed, without further digression, to give you a succinct historical and statistical account of my tannery, which I hope, without incurring the charge of egotism or vanity, I may be allowed to say has been conducted with sufficient energy and skill to realize for me a competency, while it has been the means of spreading comfort and plenty to all directly or indirectly connected with its operations. And, having closed the operations of the tannery, I may be allowed here to remark that the improvement in the business of a community, the aid to society where such an establishment exists, always paying promptly, and liberally rewarding the diligent laborer, can only be appreciated by the few who understand its advantages. And I may, in justice to myself, express the proud satisfaction of having conducted this vast business without litigation,—truly accomplish-

ing what I said to my neighbors in the outset, that "I came to live *with* them, not *on* them."

A little more than twenty years ago, the district of country in which the tannery stands was a perfect wilderness. Although just back of the well-known Catskill range, and not more than thirty-six miles from the banks of the Hudson, the great thoroughfare of our interior trade, the depths of its hemlock forests, the solitude of its mountain glens, and the glistening spray of its tumbling brooks, had been explored only by the foot of the hunter, and were as little known to the public as the slopes and valleys of the Rocky Mountains.

In 1824 I visited this district, and my judgment at once decided me to select it as the most advantageous location for the prosecution of my enterprise. It has ever been my motto, that to *will* and to *do* are one and the same thing. I accordingly went to work, and in less than ninety days a tannery was erected, and all was ready for the commencement of business.

My tannery is an immense wooden building, five hundred and thirty feet in length, forty-three feet in breadth, and two stories and a half high. Within this area are contained three hundred vats, tanning over sixty thousand sides of leather a year, with conductors to draw the liquor to the pump, affording about forty-six thousand cubic feet of room for tanning purposes. A large wing, forty feet by eighty, extending over the stream, contains twelve leaches, six of them furnished with copper heaters, containing about twelve thousand feet, and also the bark-loft, through which, in the course of the year, pass more than six thousand cords of bark. The mills through which it is ground are capable of grinding over a cord of bark per hour; and it has connected with it a pump of sufficient capacity to deliver one thousand feet of "ooze," or water charged with tannin, in thirty minutes. The beam-house contains thirty vats, equivalent to seven thousand six hundred and forty

cubic feet. It has connected with it three hide-mills for softening the dry Spanish hides, and two rolling machines, capable of rolling five hundred sides per day. Outside of the building, but connected with the beam-house by an underground communication, are eight stone sweat-pits, with pointed arches and flues. The pits are of the most approved size, being in area ten feet by fourteen, and in depth eight feet, with a spring of water at one corner.

Since I first commenced business, the gain of weight in converting hides into leather has been increased nearly fifty per cent. That is, that from a quarter to a third more leather can now be obtained from a given quantity of hides, than at the time when I learned my trade at my father's tannery, conducted in the old-fashioned way, some forty years ago.

The great improvement in weight seems to have been gained by the judicious use of strong liquors, or "ooze," obtained from finely-ground bark, and by skilful tanning.

The loss and wastage upon hides, from hair, flesh, etc., may be estimated at from twelve to fifteen per cent. In order to produce heavy weights, the hides should not be reduced too low in the beam-house, and should be tanned quickly with good strong liquors, particularly in the latter stage of the operation. To green hides, especially, nothing can be more injurious than to suffer them to remain too long in weak "ooze." They become too much reduced; grow soft, flat and flabby; lose a portion of their gelatine, and refuse to "plump up."

On the other hand, however, the effects of an early application of "ooze" that is too strong and too warm to green hides is very injurious. It contracts the surface fibres of the skin, tanning at once the external layers so "dead," as it is termed, as to shut up the pores, and prevent the tannin from penetrating through the hide. This renders the leather harsh and brittle. It will, from this, be seen, that in the question of the proper strength of liquor alone,

there is room for the exercise of the greatest judgment and most extensive experience. In view of the great difficulty of applying fixed rules to the innumerable variety of cases, nothing can be depended upon but the judgment of the practical tanner.

In softening hides, and preparing them for the process of tanning, a great deal also depends upon the judgment of the person superintending the operation, inasmuch as the diversities in the qualities and characteristics of hides render it impossible to subject them to anything more than a general mode of treatment.

In "sweating," the character of the hides, and the temperature, are essential but ever-varying considerations. As a general rule, however, the milder the process of preparing the hides for the bark, the better. Unnecessarily severe or prolonged treatment is inevitably attended with a loss of gelatine, and a consequent loss of weight and strength in the leather. Too high a temperature is particularly to be avoided. In almost every lot of hides, particularly Orinocos, however, there are generally some that prove very intractable, resisting all the ordinary modes of softening. For such, a solution of ashes, potash, or even common salt, will be found beneficial; and peculiarly so in hot weather. As I have said, no precise rule can be given as to the length of time required for the preliminary process of soaking and "sweating," so much depending upon the qualities of the hides, and the temperature at which these operations are conducted.

The following table may, however, be found useful in conveying an approximation to a definite idea of the practice in my tannery:

	SOAKING.			
	40° Days.	50° Days.	60° Days.	70° Days.
Buenos Ayres hides,	10 to 12	8 to 12	6 to 8	3 to 6
Carthagena and Laguira,	8 to 12	7 to 9	5 to 7	2 to 5

	SWEATING.			
	40° Days.	50° Days.	60° Days.	70° Days.
Buenos Ayres hides,	15 to 20	12 to 16	8 to 12	2 to 3
Carthagena and Laguira,	15 to 20	10 to 15	6 to 8	2 to 3

cul. I would here remark that I changed the process from liming to the bating, for the sole-leather, in 1836, the only change in tanning I have made for twenty years; and, for heavy sole-leather, it has been proved to be quite as good as liming, if not better, and somewhat cheaper, besides yielding a greater gain of weight, and, when well tanned, making leather more impervious to water. Liming and "bating," however, for upper and light leather, is preferable; and, if the same improvements had been adopted with the lime process, of strong liquor and quick tanning, it is not yet certain that the same results would not have been attained.

Salted hides do not require more than two-thirds the time to soak, but generally rather longer to sweat. After the hides are prepared for tanning, the next process is what is commonly called "handling," which should be performed two or three times a day in a weak "ooze," until the grain is colored. New liquors, or a mixture of new and old, are preferable for Spanish or dry hides,—old liquor for slaughter. They are then, after a fortnight, laid away in bark, and changed once in two to four weeks, until tanned. Much care and judgment is requisite in proportioning the continually-increasing strength of the liquors to the requirements of the leather, in the different stages of this process.

The liquors should also be kept as cool as possible, within certain limits, but ought never to exceed a temperature of eighty degrees; in fact, a much lower temperature is the maximum point, if the liquor is very strong; too high a heat, with a liquor too strongly charged with the tanning principle, being invariably injurious to the life and color of the leather. From this it should seem that time is an essential element in the process of tanning; and that we cannot make up for the want of it by increasing the strength of the liquor, or raising the temperature at which the process is conducted, any more than we can fatten an ox or horse by giving him more than he can eat.

It may be questioned (if anything may be doubted in the present improving age) whether any patented schemes for the more rapid conversion of hides into leather will be found, on the whole, to have any practical utility.

I have mentioned the injurious effects resulting from too strong a solution of the active principle of the bark; on the other hand, the use of too weak solutions is to be avoided. Hides that are treated with liquor below the proper strength become much relaxed in their texture, and lose a portion of their gelatine. The leather necessarily loses in weight and compactness, and is much more porous and pervious to water. The warmer these weak solutions are applied, the greater is this loss of gelatine. To ascertain whether a portion of weak liquor contains any gelatine in solution, it is only necessary to strain a little of it into a glass, and then add a small quantity of a stronger liquor. The excess of tannin in the strong, seizing upon the dissolved gelatine in the weak liquor, will combine with it, and be precipitated in flakes, of a dark, curdled appearance, to the bottom. At the Prattsville Tannery, the greatest strength of liquor used for handling, as indicated by Pike's barkometer, is 16° ; of that employed in laying away, the greatest strength varies from 30° to 45° .

After the leather has been thoroughly tanned and rinsed, or scrubbed by a brush-machine or broom, it will tend very much to improve its color and pliability to stack it up in piles, and allow it to sweat until it becomes a little slippery from a kind of mucus that collects upon its surface. A little oil added at this stage of the process, or just before rolling, is found to be very useful.

Great caution is necessary in the admission of air in drying, when first hung up to dry. No more air than is sufficient to keep the sides from moulding should be allowed. Too much air—or, in other words, if dried too rapidly in a current of air—will injure the color, giving a darker hue, and rendering the leather harsh and

brittle. To insure that the thick parts or butts shall roll smooth and even with the rest of the piece, it is necessary that the leather should be partially dried before wetting down for rolling, and that, when wet down, it should lay long enough for every side to become equally damp throughout.

The following table, condensed from the tanning records of two hundred thousand hides, exhibits the time required to tan the various description of hides at my establishment, during a period of four years. It will be seen that the same description of hides require different times in different years. This is owing mainly to a difference in the temperature and weather of the several seasons, and the quantity of sides and strength of liquor in the vats, and partly to the different conditions and qualities of different lots of the same descriptions of hides.

	No. of sides.	Time of tann'g. mo. ds.		No. of sides.	Time of tann'g. mo. ds.
1841 — San Juan, . . .	7,500	4 20	1843 — Rio Grandé, . .	5,800	4 20
Orinoco, . . .	3,500	5 15	1844 — Buenos Ayres, .	6,500	6 20
“ . . .	1,900	6	Orinoco, . . .	5,400	7
“ . . .	9,000	6 10	California, . . .	1,200	6 20
Laguira, . . .	22,000	7 15	Buenos Ayres, .	900	7 10
Orinoco, . . .	6,500	5 15	“ . . .	6,500	5 10
Matamoras, . .	1,100	5	Orinoco, . . .	1,500	4 20
“ . . .	2,300	5 20	Rio Grandé, . .	2,100	5
San Juan, . . .	6,500	4 15	“ . . .	4,000	5 10
Montevideo, . .	5,800	4	Orinoco, . . .	2,800	6 10
1842 — Honduras, . .	3,600	6 20	Laguira, . . .	5,100	7
Buenos Ayres, .	10,500	6 10	Rio Grandé, . .	1,100	7
Chagres, . . .	1,700	6	Buffalo, . . .	2,000	5
1843 — Orinoco, . . .	1,100	5	Buenos Ayres, .	2,000	6
Montevideo, . .	2,700	5	Rio Grandé, . .	8,500	6 10

From the above table, it will be seen the average time of tanning in 1842 was five months and seventeen days; of 1843, five months and twenty-two days; of 1844, six months; and of 1845, six months and eleven days. Average of the whole time, five months and twenty-seven days. The average weight of the leather was over eighteen and one-half pounds per side. This, according to the best authorities we have at hand, is considerably below the time

employed in England. There, it is no uncommon thing for eight and ten months to be employed in tanning a stock of leather; and some of the heaviest leather, it is said, takes even fourteen and eighteen months. Such deliberation undoubtedly insures a fine quality of leather, but it may be questioned whether there is not a great loss in the increase of weight — a loss of interest on capital, and, in consequence, an unnecessary enhancement of price, which does not suit the American market.

In order to show the amount of business done, I have carefully collected and tabularized from my books the following statistics of the "Prattsville Tannery" for twenty years, in tanning about one million sides of sole-leather:

STATISTICS OF THE PRATTSVILLE TANNERY FOR TWENTY YEARS — VARIOUS MATERIALS USED, AND LABOR EMPLOYED.

6,666 acres bark land = 10 square miles = 18 cords to the acre =	
120,000; at \$3 per cord,	\$360,000
Number of days' work peeling and piling do., days	118,555
Four trees to the cord, trees	475,200
120,000 loads or cords = 264,000,000 lbs., cords	132,000
444 acres of woodland = 32,000 loads, or cords, worth	32,000
135,380 bushels of oats, at 42 cents per bushel,	41,967
1200 tons of hay, at \$8 per ton,	9,600
313,000 days' work in tannery = 1000 years' labor, at	
\$14 per month,	\$162,000
Board, at \$1.50 per week, 78,000	— 240,000
500,000 hides, weighing 15,000,000 lbs.,	1,750,000
Cartage, 5700 loads of 2600 lbs. each (one pair horses).	
1,000,000 sides sole-leather, at 18 lbs. per side, lbs.	18,000,000
Hides and leather, together,	33,000,000
Cost of carting,	\$52,800
3000 lbs. per load of leather, one pair of horses, 6,000	
2600 " " " " hides, " " " " " 5,700	— 11,700
Freight of hides and leather between New York and Catskill, . . .	\$30,000
Equal to 18,000,000 lbs. of leather, at 17 cents per lb.,	3,060,000
Lost and worn out about 100 horses, at \$75 each,	7,500
Cost of wagons, at \$250 per year,	5,000
Insurance on stock,	12,000
Yearly expenses, 300,000. Total expenses, about	6,000,000

And, in justice to my workmen, I ought to say, without the use of ardent spirits, or ever having a side of leather stolen.

A glance at this table will at once convince any one that the advantages of such an establishment are not confined to the amount of value produced. The labor employed, directly or indirectly,

may be set down at two hundred men daily. The ramified branches of business and trade that it fosters; the comfort, refinement and intelligence, of which it becomes the centre; and its final influence upon the growth and populousness of the surrounding district, cannot, I think, be too highly estimated. The following table shows but one single item—the amount of labor employed within the walls, or that which is directly and immediately employed in the process of tanning; but, from a comparative inspection of it and the table above, some idea may be formed of the amount of labor indirectly engaged.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEN EMPLOYED AT THE PRATTSVILLE TANNERY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE WAGES PER MONTH.

BEAM-HOUSE.

	No. of hands.	Pay per month.	
Foreman,	1	\$32	\$32
Choresmen,	2	12 and \$6 board	36
Beamsmen,	12	14 “	180

IN THE YARD.

Foreman,	1	50	50
Handling and laying away,	8	12 “	144
Brushing leather,	6	12 “	72
Nightman to leaches,	1	14 “	20
Grinding bark by day,	1	12 “	18
“ “ “ night,	1	14 “	20
Wheeling bark,	4	12 “	72
Filling and pitching leaches,	3	24 “	60

DRYING LOFT.

Foreman,	1	20 “	26
Sponger,	1	12 “	18
Rollers,	2	15 “	42
Hanging up and taking down leather,	2	12 “	36

MISCELLANEOUS.

Foreman out-doors,	1	41 “	47
Carpenter,	1	39 “	45
Teamsters,	12	11 “	218

Total,	58		\$1,120
500 cords of bark, at \$3 per cord,			1,500
Cartage, repairs, &c., &c.,			500

Grand total per month, \$3,120

In the following table I have given a condensed view of the operations at my tannery during five years :

	No. of Hides rec'd at the Tannery.	Weight of Hides.	Cartage in New York.	Commissions.	Total value of Hides.
1841 . .	30,984	724,168	\$291.47	\$5,701.47	\$108,758.06
1842 . .	27,194	601,595	275.89	3,938.30	82,705.01
1843 . .	28,433	630,192	213.24	4,425.64	78,198.03
1844 . .	36,839	812,403	276.28	5,718.36	100,972.82
1845 . .	20,556	460,798	154.17	2,920.25	51,176.60
Total .	144,006	3,229,155	\$1,211.05	\$22,704.02	\$421,810.52

LEATHER RETURNED TO NEW YORK.

	Sides.	Pounds.	Av. weight per side.	Av. net price.	Commissions.	Net proceeds.
1841 . .	61,729	1,211,856½	19.63	\$14.44	\$7,352.24	\$175,018.54
1842 . .	54,323	995,057¾	19.32	13.93	5,827.08	138,581.05
1843 . .	56,742	1,061,523¾	18.71	13.60	6,053.42	144,331.83
1844 . .	73,590	1,310,779	17.81	12.55	6,895.25	164,517.53
1845 . .	40,891	737,789	18.03	11.06	3,420.57	81,595.26
Total .	287,575	5,316,789	18.51	\$13.24	\$29,548.66	\$704,044.21

I have been engaged over forty years in hemlock tanning; and of the many books which treat of the process of tanning, none have been found which give any information of the mode of hemlock tanning. The bark has scarcely ever been analyzed for the use of the tanner; and the knowledge which I have acquired has been the result of long-continued experience and observation. This teaches one that the hemlock is much stronger than the oak.

The tanning of leather, more than almost any other manufacture, is a chemical process, the success of which depends almost wholly upon the skill and judgment with which its complicated manipulations are conducted. To attain the requisite skill in the laboratory of the chemist, is evidently impossible; it can only be acquired in the tanning itself, by long and careful attention and observation; and, perhaps, there is no description of manufacture, where more depends upon practical knowledge, and so little upon mere theory, as in the tanning of leather. The whole process consists in effecting a combination between the gelatine, which is the main constituent of raw hides, and tannin, a peculiar substance found in the bark of several species of trees — the oak and hemlock chiefly. The processes employed are so various, and the quality and condition of the hides are so numerous and so different, that hardly

any branch of business requires for its successful conduct a greater degree of judgment and experience; and in few arts have there been greater improvements.

The following table is annexed, presenting some facts which may be of general interest :

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
1836 . .	2,151	48,130	22½	6,594	7¾	397	3,573	50,808	901,296
1837 . .	2,305	53,172	23	5,686	9	500	4,500	50,947	815,152
1838 . .	3,118	59,283	19	4,991	10	496	4,464	50,750	812,000
1839 . .	2,984	59,675	20	6,276	9	558	5,022	56,096	945,321
1840 . .	3,089	50,541	16½	6,207	9¼	590	5,310	57,601	1,009,609
	13,647	270,774	20	29,752	9	2,541	22,869	266,202	4,483,378

NOTE. — Column 1 shows the number of days' work in the beam-house ; 2, number of sides worked in ; 3, average per man per day ; 4, number of days' work grinding bark and tanning ; 5, average per man per day ; 6, number of leaches ; 7, cords of bark used, at nine cords per leach ; 8, leather tanned out (sides) ; 9, do. do. do. (pounds).

The labor in the loft, and peeling bark, during the above five years, was 8820 days. One man will work through the beam-house, in one year, 6260 sides. One man will tan and finish 2228 sides. One cord of bark tans 196 pounds.

The question has been frequently asked me, how long does it take to tan sole-leather ? I answer, from four to six months, according to the strength of the liquor, and number of sides in the vats ; and the quicker tanned, the better. I would here remark that several considerations must be noticed, in order to meet the questions understandingly ; and —

1st. I should say that the weight of the hides, every one knows, if heavy, requires more time than if comparatively light.

2d. If the hides are fresh, they are capable of being properly softened ; and if so, the process of tanning may be completed much sooner than in the case of old and hard hides, that cannot be softened with the same facility.

3d. If the hides have sufficient room in the vats, so as not to lay crowded, they will tan much faster.

4th. As the tanning advances, the liquor should be renewed seasonably, and its strength increased in a ratio proportionate to each stage of tanning.

5th. The question, is the leather to be tanned so as to barely pass in market, or to be well prepared so as to make firm and solid leather, involves a consideration of much importance.

It would be easy to extend this communication, but I will not tire your patience with unnecessary details. Desirous of contributing my mite to the industrial occupations of life, I have thrown together, in my plain matter-of-fact manner, only such facts and figures as it appeared to me would be of service to my brother mechanics ; and if they prove so, I shall feel amply rewarded for the preparation of the trifling contribution thus made to the general stock of knowledge—as the design of life is to be USEFUL.

With great respect,

I have the honor to be

Yours, truly,

Z. PRATT.

DESCRIPTION OF LEATHER SENT TO THE
WORLD'S FAIR, LONDON, 1851.

1. PRATTSVILLE TANNERY. — Three sides sole-leather, weight sixty-seven pounds; sweat and tanned from dry Buenos Ayres hides, with hemlock bark, in four months and twenty-two days. Gain in weight, seventy-two per cent.

2. WINDHAM TANNERY. — Three sides sole-leather, weight fifty-one and a half pounds; sweat and tanned from English salted slaughter hides, with hemlock bark, in four months and twenty-five days. Gain in weight, fifty-seven per cent.

3. WINDHAM TANNERY. — Three sides sole-leather, seventy-nine pounds; tanned from dry Laguiria hides, with hemlock bark, in six months. Gain, seventy-three per cent.

4. BIG-HOLLOW TANNERY. — Three sides sole-leather, weight fifty and one-fourth pounds; sweat and tanned from Rio Grandé hides, with hemlock bark, in five months and two days. Gain in weight, sixty-three per cent.

5. ALDENVILLE TANNERY. — Three sides sole-leather, weight seventy-two and three-fourths pounds; tanned from Buenos Ayres hides, with hemlock bark, in five and one-half months. Gain in weight, sixty-two per cent.

6. SAMSONVILLE TANNERY. — Three sides sole-leather, weight sixty-two and one-half pounds; tanned from native slaughter hides, with oak bark, in four months and twenty-seven days. Gain in weight, fifty-eight per cent.

7. SAMSONVILLE TANNERY. — Three sides sole-leather, weight fifty and three-fourths pounds; tanned from dry Buenos Ayres hides, with hemlock bark, in four months and three days. Gain in weight, sixty-four per cent.

8. SAMSONVILLE TANNERY. — Three butts, weight eighty-nine and one-fourth pounds; tanned from New York city salted slaughter hides, with oak and hemlock bark, in five months and twenty-six days.

9. SAMPLES OF HEMLOCK BARK. — Used in tanning sole-leather at the tanneries of Zadock Pratt. The bark was peeled in the months of May and June, and weighs, when dry, about two thousand two hundred pounds per cord. A cord of the bark will tan from one hundred and ninety to two hundred pounds of leather.

LETTER RESPECTING A NEW BREED OF CATTLE.

PRATTSVILLE, *April 2, 1849.*

B. P. JOHNSON, ESQ., *Sec'y N. Y. State Agricultural Society.*

DEAR SIR: While passing through Virginia to the South, I had my attention (through the courtesy of his excellency, Governor McDowell), called to a new breed of cattle, which was brought to this country by Lieut. Lynch, to whom was intrusted the Dead Sea Expedition. They were obtained near the Red Sea, by Lieut. Lynch, and he presented them to Hon. Mr. Mason, Secretary of the Navy, who forwarded them to the Governor of Virginia, for the benefit of the agriculturalists of that state. They are ten and twelve months old, a bull and heifer. In color, a dark, brownish red, with coarse hair. At first view, at a distance, they resembled the elk. Heads small; have something of the appearance of the Mooly breed, though there is the appearance of horns, perhaps about an inch in length. They are very tall and gaunt, seem well formed for travelling, legs very straight, and much darker than the body. The largest — the bull — stands about five feet high, and more lengthy, in proportion, than our common cattle, and much smaller limbs, with round bodies. Although they have had the best of keeping, they show no signs of a tendency to lay on flesh, and are certainly, in appearance, a different kind of cattle from any of our breeds; and it is hardly probable, I should think, that they can improve our stock.

I have seen the cattle of different portions of this country: the small cattle of Georgia; the long-legged and long-horned breed of Mississippi, as well as those of the Western and Northern States; and the improved Short-horns, Devons, Herefords, Ayrshire, &c.,

which have been imported into this country; — but these are different from any I have before seen. I regret that these cattle had not found their way to our own state. I think, under the care of some of our good farmers, a trial might have been made with some of our northern cattle, that would probably have proved more satisfactory than those of Virginia, where comparatively much less attention is given to the improvement of neat cattle than with us.

Lieut. Lynch is certainly deserving of much credit for having turned his attention to this subject; and, although these cattle may not prove valuable as a cross with ours, still the effort should be encouraged, and it is to be hoped that our officers, when opportunity offers, will obtain animals from different countries, so that we may be enabled to test the different breeds of animals as to their adaptation to our country.

It seems to me that our society might do great good, if you could secure some of the celebrated Scotch cattle, and try them for our northern mountain counties. They are said to fatten very readily; and, reared as they are in the mountains of Scotland, and in the isles adjacent, they must possess a hardiness of character that would render them valuable.

There are also others, I presume, that might prove useful. I allude to them merely to call the attention of our society to it; and would suggest whether some arrangement might not be made with some of our shippers at New York, by which you might obtain some of those cattle, which as yet, I believe, have not found their way to this country.

I am glad of this opportunity of calling attention to these cattle, and trust the Governor of Virginia will hereafter give to the public the result of this cross with our cattle. It gives me great pleasure to bear testimony to the great courtesy extended to me by Gov. McDowell during my stay in Richmond.

I have the honor to be yours, truly,

Z. PRATT.

LETTER TO PROFESSOR DE-BOW.

At the annual meeting of the Agriculturalists' and Mechanics' Association of Louisiana, held at Baton Rouge, January, 1847, on motion of D. D. Avery, Esq., it was

Resolved, unanimously, That the Hon. Zadock Pratt, of New York, be constituted an honorary member of this association; and that a committee of two be appointed to carry out this resolution. Committee: D. D. Avery and J. D. B. DeBow, Esquires.

COL. PRATT'S ANSWER.

PRATTSVILLE, GREENE Co., *March 2, 1847.*

GENTLEMEN: I have received your flattering letter of the 10th ultimo, advising me of my election as an honorary member of the Louisiana Agriculturalists' and Mechanics' Association.

Be assured, gentlemen, that I highly appreciate the honor. Mechanic and farmer as I am, I take great pride in being associated with my brethren of the South. While you furnish us with cotton and sugar, we, in return, send our leather and other manufactured articles, and thus mutually benefit each other. Hoping, gentlemen, that we may thus always be found coöperating for our country's good, and that the exchange of good will and mutual advantage may be constantly increased,

I remain yours, truly.

To Messrs. D. D. AVERY and J. D. B. DeBow, Committee.

STATISTICS RESPECTING THE IMPORTANCE OF A NEW COUNTY.

THE distances from Prattsville, the proposed centre of the new county, to the court-houses in the adjoining counties, are as follows : To Catskill, 37 miles ; to Delhi, 32 miles ; to Schoharie, 31 miles, and to Kingston, 45 miles. The distances from Prattsville to the centres of the various towns proposed to be included in the new county are from 8 to 14 miles. The population of Greene county, in 1840, was 30,446. Deduct the population of the towns of Prattsville, Windham, and Lexington,—6843,—and it leaves in Greene county 23,603.

The population of Delaware county in 1840 was 35,363; from which deduct the population of the towns of Roxbury and Middletown, 5612, and it leaves for Delaware county 29,751.

The population of Schoharie county in 1840 was 33,351; from which deduct the population of the towns of Blenheim, Broome, and Conesville, and there remains in Schoharie county 25,600.

The population of the various towns in the proposed new county is as follows :

Prattsville,	1,613		Middletown,	2,608
Lexington,	2,813		Blenheim,	2,726
Windham,	2,417		Roxbury,	3,004
Broome,	2,404			
Conesville,	1,621		Total,	19,206

There are twenty counties in this state, the average of whose population is 18,551. There are twenty-nine tanneries in the proposed new county, which employ a capital of about \$1,285,000,—a larger amount than is used for the same purpose in any county in the United States.

The surface of the country furnishes an argument in favor of the erection of a new county. It is generally broken and mountainous, and most of the streams are tributary to the Schoharie Creek, which passes through the centre and along the borders of most of the towns included in the new county.

In the erection and division of counties, the convenience and accommodation of the people should be objects of permanent consideration. This being admitted, our claims upon the favorable consideration of the Legislature are, it is believed, as strong as any that can be presented to them. And we doubt not that, sooner or later, this will be admitted by the candid of all parties. All we ask, then, is even-handed justice.

It is objected, by some, that the taxes of the people in the new county will be heavier than they now are.

This position is untenable, for the following reasons: Taxes are made up almost entirely of the expenses incurred in the support of the poor, and in the prosecution of criminal business. The sheriff has only his fees; so with the clerk, surrogate, district attorney and jailer.

The judges' and jurors' fees are the only additional expense. These in the county of Greene for the last year amounted to \$600. These cannot exceed one-half that sum in the new county, for the reason that there will not be one-half of the civil and criminal prosecutions and litigation in the new county that there now are in the county of Greene.

Now the assertion is made, without fear of contradiction, that at least five-sixths of the expenses incurred by the support of the poor, and the prosecution of criminal business, come from the river towns, and from large and populous places.

The above remarks, applicable to Greene county, will, it is presumed, apply to the other counties.

PRATTSVILLE, *Dec.*, 1841.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE STONE- CUTTERS.

WASHINGTON, *July* 16, 1850.

SIR : At a meeting of the stone-cutters and other mechanics, in the city of Washington, employed upon the public and other buildings, the following preamble and resolutions were passed, namely :

“Whereas, it is not unfit or unbecoming in the laboring men of this country, when they find in a representative of the people talents of a rare character, or great merit, or that he has a peculiar friendship and regard for the interest of the working-man, to give expression to their feelings in relation thereto : Therefore,

“*Resolved*, That the Hon. Zadock Pratt, whilst a member of the House of Representatives of the United States from the State of New York, manifested his friendship in a practical manner for the working-men of this District, by his unceasing and successful efforts to have the public buildings of this city constructed of magnificent proportions and of beautiful and enduring material ; and by his advocacy of the doctrine that the laborer upon said buildings was ‘worthy of his hire.’

“*Resolved*, That, in order to manifest our sense of his efforts, on several occasions, in behalf of the working-men of this District, and of his industry and good sense as a legislator, we offer to the acceptance of the Hon. Zadock Pratt a stone, of the material of his choice, to be prepared and embellished by our hands and skill, in such manner as will illustrate his own character and career ; to be presented by him to the managers of the Washington Monument,

to constitute a portion of that magnificent pile now in course of erection in the city.

“Resolved, That Alexander Provest, Thomas J. Galt, William H. Winter, and William Morrow, be a committee to transmit a copy of these proceedings to the Hon. Zadock Pratt, and in our behalf to tender him the stone for the monument.”

The undersigned, in carrying into effect the wishes of the stone-cutters and other mechanics and working-men of this city, by tendering the stone provided for, cannot refrain from expressing the pleasure they take in doing so. They, too, were witnesses of your efforts in Congress, not only in behalf of this city, but of the entire country. They, too, have been, and now are, participants in the benefits of your enlightened, practical and liberal policy. They always regarded you as a practical legislator — such an one as is at all times valuable in a numerous and great representative body. You were emphatically the laboring legislator. Being yourself a mechanic of great experience, you always seized upon that which was practical, and which would be conducive of the greatest good. Having, by industry, frugality, good common sense, and great perseverance, advanced yourself from the position of an humble boy to that of a wealthy man, and finally to the exalted position of a representative in the American Congress, and having knowledge of the hardships, the wants, and the necessities of the laboring man, enabled you, above most others, to legislate practically for his advantage. Of that action we speak in commendation with pride and pleasure. Your career affords a striking illustration of the freedom and beauty of our institutions. In tendering to you the expression of our regards, may we be permitted also to express the hope that ere that career terminates, the glory our institutions may be, by your further successes, illustrated in a still greater degree.

Be pleased to inform us of your pleasure in regard to the subject of this letter.

We have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servants,

ALEXANDER PROVEST,

THOMAS J. GALT,

WILLIAM H. WINTER,

WILLIAM MORROW.

To the Hon. ZADOCK PRATT, Prattsville, N. Y.

PRATTSVILLE, GREENE COUNTY, NEW YORK.

GENTLEMEN: I had the honor to receive, on the 18th instant, your letter of the 16th, communicating to me a copy of the resolutions of the stone-cutters and other mechanics of the city of Washington, and tendering to me, in their behalf, a suitable stone, to be presented to the managers of the National Washington Monument Society. I am most sensibly affected by this kind and charitable appreciation of my humble services while a representative of the people in the House of Congress. This action on the part of the hard-working, generous-hearted men whom you represent on this occasion, was as unexpected to me as it is most gratifying. I appreciate the testimonial the more, because of the source from which it emanates. It proceeds from men with good judgments and honest hearts, who are always governed by generous and noble impulses.

It is true that I exerted the utmost of my humble abilities in the House of Representatives to promote, as far as any action there could promote, the interests of the working-men of your city, and of the city itself, in the manner so kindly alluded to by you. I hope, as I believe, I was not entirely unsuccessful. Your charity, however, has thrown a veil over the imperfections of ability and want of success, by paying generous tribute to a good intention. As an American, representing a proud and generous

constituency, I felt in a great degree mortified at the manner in which the public buildings at Washington had been constructed; and I worked zealously to have one of the most magnificent of those proposed to be erected constructed of marble, instead of the destructible material of which the capitol, treasury, and a portion of the patent-office buildings, are composed. Whilst I desired to see the government buildings commensurate with the present and future wants of the government, I had in view also their durability. While I contemplated with pride and pleasure the rise and extraordinary progress of this great republic, I felt no little degree of mortification that the buildings for governmental purposes at Washington had been constructed as if those who ordered their erection looked to an early period of time within which either that the federal government itself should dissolve, or that its capital should be removed nearer the geographical centre of the Union. I banished from my mind both ideas, for I could not contemplate either but with pain and forebodings of evil. I proceeded to act as if the day would never arrive in which either idea might have a real existence. I pray that neither may have, for in both are involved evils most dire. I then felt, as I now feel the more anxiously, a desire that the city of the Father of his Country should continue through all ages to be the capital of the great republic which he founded; and that its magnificence and grandeur should be in keeping with the greatness and glory of the nation, and to serve in some measure to perpetuate a knowledge of the fact that the territory had been selected by the *Pater Patriæ* as the permanent capital of the Union. For this reason, if no other, the public buildings at Washington should be constructed of material as durable as the everlasting hills. They should be in their proportions ample for all the purposes of government. They should be of such beauty and magnificence and strength as the material of which our country abounds, and the skill of our mechanics, are capable of making them. For a government looking to perma-

nency to construct its buildings of inadequate size and of destructible material, is a most paltry economy. I so viewed it, and also as a great evil, which I endeavored to rectify by my actions in Congress. I am pleased that the policy which I then advocated and but partially accomplished is now in progress, of having all the future public buildings constructed of white marble, and of sufficient dimensions for the purposes of government.

The fact will scarcely be credited by the people of the nation, that at this day the government of the United States has its most important archives,—the original papers connected with and forming its early history, the original writings of its heroes and statesmen,—of Washington, Adams, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and a host of others,—in fact, all the original paper evidences of the glorious achievements of our arms upon the sea and the land,—piled away, without order, in miserable, destructive buildings, for the want of fire-proof ones of proper capacity in which to deposit them with security. The people will scarcely credit the further fact, that in these days of progress and plenty, when the coffers of the government are filled to repletion with the moneys of the people,—the laboring people,—that their representatives are paying rent for destructible buildings in Washington, for the use of the government, in the round sum of twenty-five thousand dollars per annum. Thus is the United States government, by the action of Congress, made the tenant of private individuals at Washington, for the insecure building in which they partly deposit their valuable archives. Does this thoughtless policy comport with the dignity of our government? Does it impress the mind with any favorable idea of permanence in the continuance of our federative system? Does it present evidence that the representatives in Congress have confidence in its stability or long duration? It strikes me not so. To say the least of such policy, it presents a most erroneous system of economy, and shows great disregard for the preservation of the historical records of this republic. But I believe this state of

things is attributable rather to demagogism and affectation of economy, while practising the greatest extravagance, than to a disregard of the importance of a reverse policy. It is a most unpardonable extravagance to pay a rent of twenty-five thousand dollars a year for buildings that neither afford convenience nor security for the public records.

Should the state, war, or navy departments burn, the loss to the nation would be irreparable. No amount of money could replace the valuable papers (whose destruction would be inevitable) which I have enumerated above, and from which our history is yet to be written. A few years ago, the treasury and post-office buildings — of the same character and material as the present state, war and navy buildings — were consumed, and all the valuable papers and models deposited therein. It cost the government more to replace copies of these papers, vouchers, and to reconstruct the models, than it would have cost originally to construct fire-proof buildings of sufficient capacity in which to preserve them for ages. Such was the economy,—economy which, I am pleased to learn, the present representatives of the people have, for their own credit, and the respectability of the government, begun to abandon.

Be pleased to inform the stone-cutters of Washington of my acceptance, with a heart sensibly affected, of the stone for the monument to Washington; which monument I pray that we may all live to see completed, and towering its pure, graceful and majestic proportions towards the abode of the pure man and noble patriot whose memory it is intended to perpetuate. I pray that Americans from the states of the Atlantic and Pacific may, for ages untold, be permitted to meet at its base as brothers and citizens of one common Union, there to admire its magnificence, and imbibe fresh spirit of patriotism, which may inspire new devotion to the Union.

I thank the stone-cutters of Washington, as I do the gentlemen of the committee, who have been pleased to speak of my career in such terms of commendation. I fully appreciate the allusions to my early and humble beginning. The recollection of the hard lessons which I received in that school of adversity, instead now of oppressing my mind with unpleasant sensations, expands my breast with gratitude and pleasurable emotions. The hardships of early life, at which we oft repine, are but the seeds of future blessings. I feel great pride in recurring to that beginning. There is no mechanic under our free and blessed institutions who need repine at his condition, however humble, or despair of success. There was no beginning more humble than my own. It requires but the determination of a purpose to succeed, to give success to all reasonable undertakings in this life. I set out without money, but with determination. I labored assiduously, under the inspiration of such an ambition. This, under the benign influences of our happy system of government, gave me great success, compared with the beginning. I shall be most happy, should my humble career be a mark worthy the emulation of the young mechanics of the country, who are about to start out upon their career. My feelings and chief ambition now are, to exalt in the scale of prosperity and intelligence, as far as I may have the power to do so, the mechanics and laboring men of the country.

Allow me to suggest the propriety of putting on the face of the stone the strong arm of the working-man,—the sure support and defence of the nation,—and then fill it out with such other embellishments as the committee shall approve.

I have the honor to be yours, truly,

ZADOCK PRATT.

MESSRS. ALEXANDER PROVEST, THOMAS J. GALT, WILLIAM H. WINTER, WILLIAM MORROW, *Committee.*

LETTER TO THE NEW YORK MECHANICS'
INSTITUTE, DECLINING REELECTION AS
PRESIDENT.

PRATTSVILLE, N. Y., *May* 28, 1851.

GENTLEMEN: I am in receipt of your favor of the 26th inst., in which you again propose to present my name to the members of the Mechanics' Institute as a candidate for the office of its president. For two years successively I have had the honor to preside over the institution on whose behalf you address me. It has been to me a position of pride and gratification. The mechanics of this country have a very large share of my regard and sympathy. My personal experience has been too closely allied with their interests to permit me to be indifferent to aught that may promote their welfare. The commonwealth of which we are members finds in the skill and industry of the mechanic some of the most important sources of its permanent prosperity; and when it must be confessed that our common country has much reason to look to its mechanics for its advancement in the arts and sciences, for the increase of household comforts and public improvements, for private virtue which comes from industry, and reliable patriotism which comes from a just sense of practical duty, I cannot but feel an honest pride *as a citizen*, independent of personal considerations, in being permitted to share their labors and honors, and to encourage their efforts.

Besides, the high and noble objects of your institution, the promotion of moral and scientific improvement, are powerful appeals to one who is unwilling to refuse his humble coöperation in whatever promises to be useful.

But, gentlemen, while I shall ever remain one of your devoted

friends, I pray you to excuse me for declining to accept the nomination which you tender me. You have many members which can serve you better ; and I have many cares which require my undivided attention.

Accept, gentlemen, my thanks for the kindness which prompted this renewal of your confidence in my ability to serve you, and believe me to be, with undiminished regard,

Yours, truly,

Z. PRATT.

THOMAS C. DODD, Esq., *Actuary*.

MESSRS. RODGERS, SCHULTZ, HARPER & BROTHERS.

CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS.

REPORTS AND RESOLUTIONS.

REPORT ON MARBLE AND GRANITE FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS.*

IN the construction of public edifices, a due regard should be had to taste, proper materials, durability and economy. The committee, in view of this subject, believe that due caution has not been used heretofore in the choice of the materials selected for the erection of the public buildings in this city. From some cause or other, which the committee will not now attempt to investigate, nearly all the public structures are constructed of a loose, friable and porous sandstone, which, from its fragile conformation, its tendency to absorb water, and also to receive injury from the weather, is perhaps the worst material for building in the world, without being recommended by any consideration of superior cheapness, to compensate, in any adequate degree, for its inferiority.

It is found, from actual tests, that fifteen cubic feet of this conge-

* 25th Congress, third session, House of Representatives. — Report of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, to whom was referred the resolution of Feb. 11, 1839, to wit: “*Resolved*, That the Committee on Public Buildings be instructed to inquire into the expediency of having the public buildings hereafter to be erected built of either marble or granite, instead of the sandstone that has been used; and that said committee report to this house which of these materials is the most durable and convenient, and the several prices at which each of said materials can be furnished.”

lated sandstone weighs one ton, and will absorb seventy-three and one-third pounds of water, or nearly five pounds of water to each square foot; whereas the same body of marble or granite has little or no absorbent qualities. It is deemed by men of intelligence and practical mechanics as altogether unfit for the purposes to which it has been applied; its only recommendation being the facility with which it can be wrought. It varies very much in its compactness in different blocks, lacking the essential uniformity of marble or granite. And we have daily demonstration that a building erected of sandstone will never be thoroughly dry. Marble or granite needs no exterior defence, while sandstone requires a coat of paint to secure its utility for any length of time; and that will only lessen, not prevent, absorption. Imperfect formations and large cavities occur in the best pieces, which are not easily detected; a block may appear to be perfect, but, after a few weeks' exposure to the climate, various imperfections make their appearance. In addition to these objections, much of it contains large portions of iron, in most instances not apparent at first, but which, by continued action of the atmosphere and moisture, becomes oxidized, not merely producing an unsightly stain through the thickest coat of paint, but actual disintegration of the stone itself. An experienced workman asserts that "he had never seen any of the many quarries in Stafford or Spottsylvania counties" (from which the sandstone hitherto used has been procured) "which would stand in an exposed situation more than ten years." The truth of this statement may be seen by examining the base of the capitol in several places.

It is a matter of the highest consideration that the special objects for which the public buildings are erected should not be lost sight of in their construction.

The preservation of the public records from injury is of the utmost importance; and if we are careful to secure them from fires

and robbers, we ought also to provide for their safety from the injuries which dampness is liable to inflict upon them; therefore, it is desirable that those materials which are most free from the objections here stated should be preferred; and what may be deemed admissible under other circumstances, and at an earlier period, the facilities for procuring the best materials which now exist, and the progress of science and knowledge on the subject, would now render entirely inexcusable.

Nor should the health and comfort of those who are employed in the discharge of official duties in our public offices be disregarded. The fatal effects of confinement and toil are sufficiently destructive, without superadding the ill effects of continual damps; and we will add, that, even in this capitol, much of the sickness and loss of health and life incurred by the representatives of the people may have had their origin in the foul and deleterious dampness of the building, occasioned by the absorbent qualities of the sandstone of which its massive walls are composed.

In the foregoing remarks, the committee have confined themselves to an inquiry into the fitness of the materials hitherto used in our public buildings.

Let us next consider the comparative cost of the several materials — sandstone, granite and marble. In some of the estimates heretofore furnished to the departments for the treasury building (see Doc. 285), the cost of sandstone is assumed to be less than either granite or marble; and Mills, the architect, in his estimate furnished for 1837 for the same object, in which the use of freestone is contemplated, estimated the whole cost of the building at three hundred and eight thousand, nine hundred and seventy-five dollars, and forty cents. But it appears, also, that the expense of building with that article was greatly under-estimated by him, as the sum of three hundred and fifty-seven thousand dollars has been already appropriated for that building, and a further appro-

priation of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars is asked for, without any assurance that even that sum will be sufficient to complete it; thus exhibiting a difference of nearly or quite one-third between his (Mills') estimate and the actual cost.

Further inquiries have been made by the committee as to the actual cost at which freestone is obtained, and also as to the price of granite, as offered to be contracted for. They have also made some inquiries into the cost of marble.

They have ascertained that granite, suitable for public buildings, can be had at forty cents per cubic foot, and that the average cost of freestone is fifty-seven cents per cubic foot, dockage and cartage being included; it is also liable to wastage in working of from ten to fifteen per cent., on account of imperfections in the blocks and patching. Nor does the difference of expense in favor of the use of granite stop here. The cost of painting, rendered necessary as often as once in six or seven years, by the loose and perishable qualities of the freestone, for its preservation, and putty required to be used in closing and covering up defects and fissures in the stone preparatory to painting, constitute, in themselves, no inconsiderable item of expense.

The cost of painting the capitol, on each occasion, is estimated by the master-workman at twelve thousand dollars. The president's house, treasury building and patent office, all built of the same material, would, at a like estimate, when finished, swell this expenditure to near forty thousand dollars. This expenditure, with the interest added, would, in less than a century, exceed the original cost of the edifices.

It is also apparent that the defect of material here mentioned is but partially removed by the expensive process of painting, and that for very short periods. Nor does stone-work, which has been painted, exhibit that neatness of appearance that is desirable in our public buildings. And why should a nation, having at its

command the best building materials in the world, use the worst, and, on the whole, the most expensive?

From much other valuable information which the committee have collected, they are of opinion that marble furnishes a material cheaper, more elegant, and better on very many accounts, than either granite or freestone. For the reasons of that opinion, the committee refer the house to the letter of C. H. Hill, and the other documents appended to this report.

It appears, further, that good marble, suitable for the public buildings, may be procured at or near Baltimore, by the railroad, at from fifty to ninety cents per cubic foot. The cost of working granite is set down at eighty-seven and one-half cents,* and for working marble from thirty to forty cents, per cubic foot; showing (the price of materials in blocks and the cost of working both considered) a clear advantage, in point of expense, of the marble, over either granite or sandstone. But on this subject differences of opinion seem to exist, and the information which the committee have been able to collect is less decisive; and they recommend some further inquiry as to the relative cheapness of marble compared with the granite, and if it shall be found that our public edifices can be erected of marble at the same expense, they think that, on account of its superior elegance, and its other excellent qualities, it should be preferred to granite or sandstone, in the erection of all our public buildings hereafter to be constructed.

The committee are therefore unhesitatingly of opinion, that in all cases where the use of hard materials is required on our public buildings, either granite or marble ought to be preferred, and therefore ask leave to report the following resolution, and request its adoption by the house:

*The actual cost of working granite on the treasury building was one dollar and twenty cents.

Resolved (as the sense of this house), That all public buildings hereafter to be erected for the use of the government shall be constructed of the hardest and most durable materials — either *marble* or *granite*.

NOTE, ACCOMPANYING THE REPORT, FROM ROBERT BROWN, SUPER-INTENDENT OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS, TO HON. ZADOCK PRATT.

February 14, 1839.

SIR : In answer to your inquiries respecting the price of granite, marble, and freestone, I have the honor to state that granite, in the rough, delivered at the railroad depot, can be furnished at forty cents per cubic foot; and fine cut, for ashlar, for fifty cents per superficial foot, that is, ninety cents for stone and work, fine cut. The cost of split granite, with beds and joints, cut, is seventy-five cents per superficial foot for stone and work in ashlar, including fine work for doors and windows.

The lowest price at which marble could be procured, by contract, delivered in Washington, was one dollar and seventy-five cents per cubic foot, in the rough; and the price of cutting marble for plain ashlar is forty cents per superficial foot.

The cost of freestone, delivered at the wharf in Washington, is, all blocks under two and one-half tons, forty-three and one-third cents per cubic foot; over two and one-half and under three and one-half tons, fifty cents per cubic foot; all over three and one-half tons, fifty-six and two-thirds cents per cubic foot; — averaging, throughout the building, about forty-six and one-half cents per cubic foot.

The price of cutting freestone for ashlar, plain face, thirty cents per superficial foot. Add for waste of freestone, from bursting by frost, patching clay-holes, white lead, &c.

Very respectfully, &c.

BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND COMMERCE.*

THE *importance* of statistical knowledge is proved by the circumstance that scarcely any civilized government exists in the world where a *department* or *bureau* has not been established, for the purpose of collecting, recording and arranging, statistical facts, and for the dissemination of correct information upon the fiscal, commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing interests of the respect-

* Jan. 29, 1844. — On motion of Mr. Pratt, it was “ *Resolved*, That a select committee of five members of this house be appointed to inquire into the expediency of establishing a Bureau of Statistics and Commerce, in connection with the treasury department ; ” which was done, and Mr. Pratt was appointed chairman of the same. On the 8th of March following, the committee presented this report, accompanied by the following bill :

“ A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE COLLECTING OF NATIONAL STATISTICS.

“ *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled*, That the Secretary of the Treasury be required to collect, arrange and classify, all statistical information, showing, or tending to show, the amount and value of the foreign, internal and domestic trade and commerce of the United States ; and, in like manner, all statistical information relating to the agriculture, manufactures, internal improvement, currency and banks, of the several states, together with all other objects of a similar character ; and that he annually make report thereof to the Congress of the United States.

“ SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That, for the purpose of accomplishing the foregoing object, the Secretary of the Treasury be authorized to employ one clerk at sixteen hundred dollars per annum, and two clerks at twelve hundred dollars and one thousand dollars per annum, respectively.

“ SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That a copy of the annual report hereby required to be made be furnished to the governor of each state and territory, and historical society, and to the principal colleges and universities of each state.”

ive countries wherein such institutions are established. England, France, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Sweden, Belgium, &c., and several of the smaller powers of Germany and Italy, have, in some shape or other, and under various designations, long possessed the advantages of correct official information upon their several national statistics.

Although the United States differs in its political institutions from all other countries, there is nothing in the nature or character of those institutions adverse to the establishment of such a bureau as a subsidiary branch of one of its executive departments, or which would render the information that such a bureau would be the means of furnishing less acceptable or important to this country than it has been found to be to others. On the contrary, since the laws of the United States are framed for the benefit of the *mass* of the people, and not for the advantage exclusively of any particular *class*, the legitimate objects of such legislation will be most certain to be secured by the dissemination of *correct information* upon *all* points connected with the interests of *each class* of the population. Loose, conflicting, partial, and therefore oppressive legislation, will, of necessity, flow from enactments which are based upon partial and imperfect information; wrong will, unintentionally, be inflicted upon *one branch* of the community, whilst the desire has been to promote the interests of the *others*. According as information is obtained and disseminated respecting any *particular interest*, that interest will be attended to, and legislation will be based upon the ardent and able advocacy of *that interest*, sustained by the facts and the information which *its* friends may have accumulated, instead of proceeding from a *general survey* and *consideration* of the knowledge respecting *every interest* and *every class* of the community, which a Statistical Bureau would always have the means of supplying.

Correct and extensive statistical information is no less necessary to the mass of the people, in order that they may desire, appreciate

and understand correct legislation, than it is for the legislator, to enable him to comprehend and to promote the best interests of his constituents. The want of such a bureau — or, rather, the want of the information which it would be the means of collecting and disseminating — has long been felt and acknowledged; and by none more than by those members of the national legislature who have been anxious to legislate correctly and impartially, and thereby best advance the true interests of the nation. In many cases, the information which has been necessary, owing to the want of a systematic and regular arrangement of materials, cannot be procured but after very great delay; and, in some cases, no diligence or exertion of the department upon which the call has been made can furnish the necessary replies. There are now calls on some of the departments remaining unanswered, which were made *two years ago*; and such is the quantity of extra labor thrown upon the departments by these calls for information, that, in one office, the number of *extra clerks* employed is greater than that of the *regular clerks* of the department.

But a Statistical Bureau would not only furnish the means of preventing these inconveniences and removing these impediments to judicious legislation,—it would not only be found of incalculable advantage in giving information for the *present*, but it would collect, arrange and prepare the history of the *past*, and thereby supply the best means for judging correctly respecting the *future*. By means of an *annual, well-digested and compact report*, it would spread much most important information before the people; it would make them acquainted with the relative importance of every branch of agricultural produce, the value of each department of commercial enterprise, and the results of the varied employments of manufacturing skill. Each source of revenue, and each object of expenditure, would be placed before the public eye,—not in bulky documents, which, too often, contain only the *materials* of

information, and not the *information* itself, but in *compact tables*, easy of reference, sufficiently in detail to give ample information, and sufficiently compressed to inform, without wearying the eye, or unnecessarily burdening the memory.

What can be more desirable than to place before a free people a correct knowledge of the results of their institutions, the workings of the laws under which they live, the value of the policy of their legislators, and, consequently, the interest which they may have in continuing the support of that policy, or in recommending its alteration?

Thus, a Statistical Bureau would produce the following important and highly desirable results:

First. By furnishing correct and official information relating to *all* the great interests of the country, it would prevent unintentional partial legislation in favor of *one or more*, to the injury of the *rest*. The knowledge which such a bureau would annually present would form the safest basis for both national and state legislation.

Secondly. It would facilitate legislation, by supplying ready information to the national legislature upon all subjects on which it might wish to act. The replies given to all calls for information would be *prompt*; and, when compared with those which are now obtained, after weeks or months of delay, they would be found to be more complete and accurate, more compact and better digested, giving the information sought in a smaller compass and more convenient shape. Thus correct and ready information would be furnished to the inquirer; the hurry and inconvenience, and often injurious delay to the regular work of the departments, would be avoided; and the public service be promoted, by a more ready and accurate despatch of public business.

Thirdly. The establishment of such a bureau would greatly facilitate the business of the departments, by enabling the respective officers thereof to ascertain, by a brief inspection, the absolute

and relative condition of every interest, the amount of every source of revenue, and every object of expenditure; and every question which the duties of their office, the wishes of the legislature, or the interests of the public, might prompt, would receive a ready and correct reply.

Fourthly. Such a bureau would, in a comparatively short time, furnish correct information respecting the commercial, the financial, the navigating and shipping, the manufacturing, and the agricultural interests of the country; a digested body of facts relative to the revenue, the custom-house, the post-office, the land-office, and the Indian department; correct statements respecting the population, the expenses and details of the army and navy, the progress of internal improvements, the state of banks and other institutions, and of monetary affairs and exchanges; and, in short, a regular, connected and methodized arrangement of every subject to which facts and figures bear any relation, and which are in any way connected with the history, the progress and the condition, of the nation at large, and those of the various states and territories. And here it may be remarked, that, by a full and complete arrangement of the prices of stocks, the rates of exchanges, the quantity of unemployed capital, as exhibited by the amount of deposits in banks, and other variations in the money market, the best opportunities for the execution of government financial operations would be ascertained, and the public interest materially promoted.

Fifthly. The duties of the bureau would extend to the arrangement, condensation and elucidation, of the *statistics of foreign nations*, and to all the various branches of *international commercial intercourse*. Materials for this part of the business are daily accumulating, especially from consuls and other public agents abroad. The information contained in the various documents received is always of importance, and often of the highest value; but it is now only of partial service to the legislature and the pub-

lic, by its not being methodized and arranged; and the various insulated facts are rendered valueless, for want of collocation and juxtaposition.

Sixthly. The labors of a Statistical Bureau would most essentially contribute to the increase of sound knowledge upon all subjects connected with national and international affairs among the people. The theories, often conflicting, of political economists, would give place to the practical results of experience, the sober truths of figures, and the unerring demonstrations of facts. The true interests of the people of the country, as a people *one and indivisible*, would be perceived and understood. Knowledge of the most important kind would be given to the community; additional power, the result of knowledge, would be placed in the hands of the legislature; the welfare of the country would be advanced, by its interests being better understood; and legislation would be consistent and onwards, uniformly conducing to individual happiness and national honor and prosperity. It is hoped that nations will no longer seek to conquer by war or physical force, but by an honorable rivalry in the cultivation of the arts of peace, of commerce, of agriculture, of manufactures, and of science. Practical and useful information must be furnished to our people, to enable them to compete with other nations in this laudable career. The object of this bureau would be to furnish this information, and thus place the materials for sound thought, and the foundation for correct action, within the grasp of every American citizen.

For these, among other reasons, it *appears expedient that a Statistical Bureau, in connection with the treasury department, should be forthwith established*; especially when, in addition to its *great importance*, its *ready practicability*, and its *absolute economy*, not only of *labor and of time*, but of *expenditure*, are *capable of demonstration*.

That such a bureau *can* be established in *this country*, is proved by the fact that similar institutions are in active and suc-

cessful operation in *most of the nations of Europe*; and what *has been done* in other countries *can also be done* in our own. There cannot be any want of proper persons to conduct and perform the labors of such a bureau; nor is there any lack of materials. The archives of the various departments are filled with these materials. Such additional ones as may be found necessary can be easily procured, through the agency of the functionaries of the federal government, and the voluntary coöperation of the state authorities. Of the PRACTICABILITY of the measure there can be no doubt. The *early* operations would be attended with much labor, and the results might not prove exactly full and satisfactory; but difficulties which, at first, might be considered almost insurmountable, would soon yield to industry and method. If competent and working men be employed,—men whose habits and tastes are, in some degree, formed for the task,—the result will very soon demonstrate the utility and great importance of the bureau.

The EXPENSE attending the establishment of such a bureau would be trifling in proportion to the amount of service which it would render to the country. The salaries of a chief of bureau and a few experienced and industrious clerks, the requisite stationery, and a few books for reference, would be all the cost. It is supposed that *an appropriation of five thousand dollars* would be amply sufficient for its establishment. There is reason, however, to suppose that, although this expenditure would have to be provided for in the first instance, there would, through the labors of the bureau, be an absolute *saving of much more* than that amount, by the succinct and methodized accounts which it would prepare, superseding the more bulky documents which are annually printed, at a very *great expense*, and *little public utility*. It is believed to be demonstrable that *more than three thousand dollars may be saved annually in the printing of a single document*, and such document be rendered more valuable to the pub-

lie, and contain much more information, be easier of reference, and more practically useful, than it is at present. The service of the bureau would be shown in giving *more information for less expense*, and this simply by method and arrangement. It is probable that much more than the expenses attending the establishment of the bureau would be saved in the single item of *printing*; and when to this is added the saving which it would cause in *extra clerk-hire*,—the necessity for which would, in a great degree, be superseded,—it seems to be certain that the measure would be one of *real economy in absolute expenditure*, as well as a great saving of *time* and abridgment of *labor*.

It is, therefore, respectfully submitted, *that the establishment of a Statistical Bureau* would be a measure *highly advantageous to the public interests*, one of very *easy and ready practicability*, and productive of not only a saving of *time* and *labor*, but an *absolute diminution of the annual expenses of the general government*.

The general details of the bureau would develop themselves in its progress, and in the operation of the system adopted by its principal, who ought to bring to the execution of the duties which would devolve upon him a taste for statistical inquiry, and great personal industry. The clerks employed under him should also possess a business fitness for the occupation.

The duties of the department would be to establish an extensive correspondence, and to arrange, register and preserve, all the various facts which such correspondence might bring to his knowledge; to receive all public documents issuing from Congress and the various executive departments; returns made to the department from custom-houses, banks, incorporated companies, prisons, schools, agricultural societies, and manufacturing institutions; reports on internal improvement, navigation, commerce, &c.; statements of population, disease, mortality, &c.; the laws, histories and reports, of the various states and territories; the tariffs,

and commercial and municipal regulations of foreign countries. All statistical facts contained in these various documents should be arranged in systematic order, under their proper heads, so as to show, on inspection, all the information which could be acquired upon the subject. All the statistical facts which the chief of the department would acquire from his daily readings and investigations should also be registered and arranged. Every facility should be afforded to this bureau by the various heads of departments; and all information imparted which might be in their possession, and necessary to the object in view. It is worthy of consideration whether a large amount of money might not be *saved*, if, instead of printing many bulky reports and documents, filled with details interesting to *very few* persons, all the materials they contain were digested and printed in an annual volume from the department. The *manuscript* documents, together with all the *printed* reports, &c., above alluded to, should be systematically arranged and bound in volumes, and preserved in the department. Indexes to be prepared of these volumes, so that their contents might easily be referred to, when more particular and detailed information was wanted on any subject than the digest kept by the bureau would furnish. Thus there would, in a very short time, be centred in this department every kind of statistical information which could be interesting or useful to the executive, the legislature, or the people. The annual volume, or volumes, issued by the department, would excite the highest degree of interest, and form the basis of the commercial history of the nation. The polestar is not of more importance to the mariner than these volumes will be to the statesman and legislator, in guiding him through the labyrinth of political opinion.

The committee, impressed with the importance of this measure, respectfully recommend the adoption of the accompanying bill. (See page 349.)

The following tables (Nos. 1 to 6, inclusive) are annexed, to

illustrate, in part, the views of the committee. The committee had not the materials to exhibit any portion of the internal trade between the states, which they very much desired to do.

No. 1.

TABLE EXHIBITING THE AMOUNT OF TRADE AND THE BALANCE OF TRADE WITH EACH FOREIGN DOMINION (COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT) DURING THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1841.

Dominions.	American imports.	American exports.	BALANCE OF TRADE.	
			Favor of the U. States.	Against the U. States.
Russia,	\$2,817,448	\$1,025,729		\$1,791,719
Prussia,	36,119	175,976	\$139,857	
Sweden, Norway, & dominions,	1,229,641	771,210		458,431
Danish West Indies,	1,084,321	987,283		97,038
Hanse Towns & German ports,	2,449,964	4,560,716	2,110,752	
Holland and dominions,	2,440,437	3,288,741	848,304	
Belgium,	374,833	1,823,882	1,449,049	
Great Britain and dominions, .	51,099,638	62,376,402	11,276,764	
France and dominions,	24,187,444	22,235,575		1,951,869
Spain and dominions,	16,316,303	7,181,409		9,134,894
Portugal and dominions,	574,841	349,113		225,728
Italy,	1,151,236	912,318		238,918
Sardinia,		47,000	47,000	
Sicily,	588,057	486,062		101,995
Trieste and Adriatic ports, . .	418,606	1,311,756	893,150	
Turkey, Levant, &c.,	614,872	380,546		234,326
Hayti,	1,809,684	1,155,557		654,127
Texas,	395,026	808,296	413,270	
Mexico,	3,284,957	2,036,620		1,248,337
Central America,	186,911	149,913		36,998
Venezuela,	2,012,004	762,502		1,249,502
Brazil,	6,302,654	3,517,273		2,785,380
Cisplatine Republic,	345,234	156,224		189,010
Chili,	1,230,980	1,102,988		127,992
Argentine Republic,	1,612,513	661,946		950,567
New Grenada,	144,117	110,435		33,682
West Indies, generally,		264,235	264,235	
South America, generally, . . .		78,981	78,981	
Europe, generally,		41,938	41,938	
China,	3,985,388	1,200,816		2,784,572
Asia, generally,	167,318	759,028	591,710	
South Seas and Sandwich Is., .	86,070	494,565	408,495	
Morocco,	38,114			38,114
Patagonia,	27,269			27,269
Peru,	524,376			524,376
Uncertain places,	848			848
Africa, generally,	408,955	636,768	227,813	
	127,946,177	121,851,803	18,791,318	24,885,692
	121,851,803			18,791,318
Excess of imports,	6,094,374	Balance of trade against the U. S. }		6,094,374

No. 2.

STATISTICAL VIEW OF THE COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION OF THE UNITED STATES
FOR THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1842.

Countries.	COMMERCE.			
	Exports.	Imports.	Balance due to the United States.	Balance due from the U. States.
Russia,	\$836,593	\$1,350,106		\$513,513
Prussia,	156,688	18,192	\$138,496	
Sweden, Norway & dependencies, . .	477,965	914,176		436,211
Denmark and dependencies, . .	1,047,673	584,321	463,352	
Hanse Towns, & ports in Germ'y, . .	4,564,513	2,274,019	2,290,494	
Holland and dependencies, . .	4,270,770	2,214,520	2,056,250	
Belgium,	1,610,684	619,588	991,096	
England and dependencies, . .	52,306,650	38,613,043	13,693,607	
France and dependencies, . .	18,738,860	17,223,390	1,515,470	
Spain and dependencies, . .	6,323,295	12,176,588		5,853,293
Portugal and dependencies, . .	302,964	347,684		44,720
Italy,	820,517	987,528		167,011
Sicily,	433,658	539,419		105,761
Sardinia,	40,208		40,208	
Trieste, and ports on Adriatic, . .	884,705	413,210	471,495	
Turkey, Levant, and Egypt, . .	202,036	370,248		168,212
Morocco and Barbary States, . .		4,779		4,779
Ionian Islands,		14,294		14,294
Hayti,	899,966	1,266,997		367,031
Texas,	406,929	480,892		73,963
Mexico,	1,534,233	1,995,696		461,463
Central Republic of America, . .	69,466	124,994		55,528
New Grenada,	103,724	176,216		72,492
Venezuela,	666,212	1,544,342		878,130
Brazil,	2,601,502	5,948,814		3,347,312
Argentine Republic,	411,261	1,835,623		1,424,362
Cisplatine Republic,	269,967	581,918		311,951
Chili,	1,639,676	831,039	808,637	
Peru,		204,768		204,768
South America, generally, . .	148,422		148,422	
China,	1,444,397	4,934,645		3,490,248
Europe, generally,	19,290		19,290	
Asia, generally,	578,281	979,689		401,408
Africa, generally,	523,976	539,458		15,482
West Indies, generally,	207,703		207,703	
Atlantic Ocean,				
South Seas,	146,380	41,747	104,633	
Sandwich Islands,				
North-west coast of America, . .	2,370		2,370	
Uncertain places,		10,144		10,144
	104,691,534	100,162,087	22,951,523	18,422,076

Exports, \$104,691,534
Imports, 100,162,087
Excess of exports, 4,529,447

Balances due to the United States, \$22,951,523
Balances due from the United States, 18,422,076
Balance in favor of the United States, 4,529,447

No. 2. — *Continued.*

Countries.	NAVIGATION.			
	American Tonnage.		Foreign Tonnage.	
	Entered the U. States.	Cleared from the U. States.	Entered the U. States.	Cleared from the U. States.
Russia,	8,068	5,691	1,597	1,699
Prussia,	603			2,068
Sweden, Norway, and dependencies,	4,660	3,974	13,364	5,887
Denmark and dependencies,	22,133	27,535	5,565	1,617
Hanse Towns, and ports in Germany,	14,125	16,779	40,988	54,060
Holland and dependencies,	42,237	44,091	3,614	19,332
Belgium,	12,132	12,949	7,810	12,875
England and dependencies,	737,495	738,201	595,791	590,145
France and dependencies,	147,195	186,113	20,484	20,729
Spain and dependencies,	265,640	234,219	16,822	13,814
Portugal and dependencies,	12,258	10,597	2,021	887
Italy,	4,560	7,367	1,031	1,402
Sicily,	18,360	1,272	6,167	3,016
Sardinia,	314	1,153	255	776
Trieste, and ports on the Adriatic,	4,547	10,520	332	361
Turkey, Levant, and Egypt,	4,257	1,815		
Morocco and Barbary States,				
Ionian Islands,	315			
Hayti,	26,531	21,115	419	363
Texas,	22,490	24,316	1,768	1,369
Mexico,	13,481	15,912	1,586	1,220
Central Republic of America,	2,281	638		165
New Grenada,	1,837	1,615	744	161
Venezuela,	12,287	9,742	2,796	3,211
Brazil,	37,058	38,778	5,593	2,643
Argentine Republic,	11,617	2,120	2,260	
Cisplatine Republic,	6,104	14,215	938	812
Chili,	3,072	7,092		694
Peru,	316			
South America, generally,		1,587		
China,	12,125	7,259	363	364
Europe, generally,				
Asia, generally,	3,261	6,155		
Africa, generally,	8,125	6,462	396	117
West Indies, generally,		16,920	71	710
Atlantic Ocean,	9,882	9,056		
South Seas,	39,946	50,481		
Sandwich Islands,	799	510		
North-west coast of America,		202		
Uncertain places,				
	1,510,111	1,536,451	732,775	740,497

COTTON EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES DURING THE YEARS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1841 AND 1842.

No. 3.

To	1841.		1842.	
	Pounds.	Value.	Pounds.	Value.
Russia,	986,168	\$114,578	2,833,757	\$237,314
Prussia,			61,233	5,655
Sweden and Norway,	1,832,020	197,958	891,847	73,527
Denmark,	17,928	1,801	44,722	3,078
Holland and dependencies,	2,635,158	272,531	8,391,587	645,595
The Hanse Towns,	6,495,721	672,673	9,791,368	800,157
Belgium,	9,816,030	1,033,633	8,227,699	637,058
England and her dependencies,	*348,804,077	35,687,347	+379,065,182	30,135,412
France and her dependencies,	+139,424,568	14,348,567	\$155,821,260	13,393,044
Spain and her dependencies,	9,955,534	982,380	7,108,682	665,236
Portugal and her dependencies,	25,922	2,553	46,241	4,965
Italy,	1,865,317	185,472	3,878,191	290,970
Sicily,	3,510	395	136,019	10,398
Sardinia,			394,439	36,191
Trieste, and other Austrian ports,	8,131,237	803,404	7,093,306	585,770
Turkey, the Levant, &c.,	204,684	24,231	16,682	1,399
China,			1,004,802	67,695
Venezuela,	6,226	1,728		
	530,204,100	54,330,341	584,717,017	47,593,464

* Of this, 4,631,247 pounds were Sea Island cotton.

† Of this, 5,708,698 pounds were Sea Island cotton.

‡ Of this, 1,606,177 pounds were Sea Island cotton.

§ Of this, 1,545,401 pounds were Sea Island cotton.

No. 3 — Continued.

BREAD-STUFFS EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES DURING THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1841.

To	1841.					
	Wheat.	Flour.	Indian corn.	Rye and corn meal.	Rye, oats, &c.	Biscuit.
Sweden and Swedish West Indies, . . .		\$80,247	\$3,204	\$18,025	\$3,936	\$776
Denmark and Danish West Indies, . . .		217,475	5,470	147,466	9,745	12,249
Hanse Towns,		3,227				3,227
Holland and its dependencies,		130,874	35,636	27,932	3,654	4,468
Belgium,						
England and her dependencies,		4,433,138	187,923	582,008	100,952	265,740
France and dependencies,	\$800,363	34,259	8,399	608	5,130	1,257
Spain and dependencies,	1,387	442,480	7,885	32,286	11,460	35,641
Portugal and dependencies,		34,879	30,243	39		2,490
Italy, Sicily, and Trieste,		1,275				1,314
Turkey, Levant, &c.,		3,271				2,589
Hayti,		188,173	30	446	909	214
Texas,		29,547		124	3,271	3,679
Mexico,		90,464	1,081		3,314	87,337
South America, generally,	20	2,006,423	3,096		842	1,005
West Indies, generally,	21,111	8,601	21,985	7,370	13,911	26,019
Asia, generally,		4,388	7,947	4,423	5,352	1,168
China,		1,247			35	1,328
Africa, generally,		21,170		64	1,719	1,719
South Seas and Sandwich Isles,		27,928	47	111	112	7,399
	822,881	7,759,066	312,954	820,962	159,893	378,041
						10,253,797

BREADSTUFFS EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES DURING THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1842.

STATISTICAL BUREAU.

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To	1842.				
	Wheat.	Flour.	Indian corn.	Rye and corn meal.	Biscuit.
Sweden and Swedish West Indies,		\$64,345	\$1,322	\$21,926	\$1,379
Denmark and Danish West Indies,		233,299	3,761	151,273	9,738
Hanse Towns,		4,110	15		4,125
Holland and dependencies,		95,958	3,210	18,772	7,776
Belgium,		150			194
England and dependencies,	\$911,440	4,707,415	275,282	517,066	220,933
France and dependencies,		51,119	6,978	704	783
Spain and dependencies,		338,515	6,484	28,879	26,518
Portugal and dependencies,		7,165	27,263	145	2,981
Italy, Sicily, and Trieste,					7
Turkey, Levant, &c.,		72			233
Haiti,		147,991		114	3,120
Texas,	26	19,033	2,064	97	1,534
Mexico,		115,388	12,253		1,430
South America,		1,562,092	4,721	3,194	30,561
West Indies, generally,	5,150	5,289	1,721		646
Asia, generally,		3,247			392
China,		1,612			5,154
Africa, generally,		15,508		43	5,302
South Seas and Pacific Ocean,		3,048	76		5,078
	916,616	7,375,356	345,150	742,213	323,759
					9,703,094

No. 3.—*Continued.*

PROVISIONS EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES IN THE YEARS RESPECTIVELY
ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1841, AND SEPTEMBER 30, 1842.

To	1841.	1842.
Swedish West Indies,	\$31,578	\$23,093
Danish West Indies,	79,195	76,020
Hanse Towns,	25,890	31,141
Holland and dependencies,	46,725	52,110
Belgium,	2,363	8,104
England and dependencies,	2,160,306	2,048,073
France and dependencies,	183,079	988,544
Spain and dependencies,	1,063,566	684,842
Portugal and dependencies,	8,204	8,463
Italy,		2,305
Trieste and other Austrian ports,	1,296	390
Turkey and the Levant,	1,629	1,956
Hayti,	231,359	156,527
Texas,	33,984	20,436
Mexico,	20,242	20,757
South America,	161,378	177,827
West Indies, generally,	14,129	7,699
China,	9,504	4,942
Asia, generally,	7,287	3,652
Africa, generally,	22,392	19,682
South Seas and Sandwich Islands,	39,962	11,752
	<u>4,144,068</u>	<u>4,348,315</u>

Beef, tallow, hides, and live horned cattle, . . . \$1,212,638

Pork, hams, bacon, lard, and hogs, 2,629,403

Butter and cheese, 388,185

Potatoes, 85,844

Apples, 32,245

4,348,315 — exports of 1842.

NOTE. — The above account includes the exports of beef and horned cattle ; pork, hams, bacon, lard, and live hogs ; butter, cheese, potatoes and apples. The return for tallow and hides is also included, as the official documents do not furnish a separate statement.

LEATHER, AND MANUFACTURES OF LEATHER, EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES DURING THE YEARS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1841 AND 1842, RESPECTIVELY.

	To	1841.			1842.		
		Pairs of boots and shoes.	Pounds of leather.	Value.	Pairs of boots and shoes.	Pounds of leather.	Value.
Danish West Indies,		1,882	4,200	\$2,720	965	3,494	\$1,855
Dutch West Indies,			5,472	1,026	350	4,449	1,011
England and dependencies,		17,057	353,232	99,803	23,545	310,178	95,231
Cuba and Spanish dependencies,		445	15,120	3,728	2,121	6,792	3,732
French West Indies,		12		21	96	1,174	390
Haiti,		1,060	453	1,080	1,202		884
Spain on the Mediterranean,		500		485			
Texas,		53,533	3,858	62,566	28,159	2,797	28,395
Portugal and dependencies,		1,018		729	1,690		1,266
Mexico,		611		579	5,182	1,526	5,261
South America,		14,474	7,249	14,670	24,281	14,700	22,119
Asia, generally,		966		682	1,074	615	1,237
Africa, generally,		3,628	540	3,308	2,652	75	1,860
South Seas and Pacific,		3,286	531	3,126	2,663		2,699
Sweden and Norway,					160	17,893	2,985
		98,472	390,655	193,583	94,140	363,693	168,925

No. 3. — *Continued.*

MANUFACTURES OF COTTON EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES IN THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1841.

To	Non-enumerated.	Printed and colored.	White.	Twist, &c.	Total.
Swedish West Indies,			\$76		\$76
Danish West Indies,		\$4,751	35,478	\$69	40,985
Hanse Towns,	\$687		1,412		1,412
Holland and dependencies,		2,000	86,162		88,162
Belgium,			10,894		10,894
England and dependencies,	7,108	1,530	209,856	14	218,508
France, &c.,		68	3,536		3,604
Spain, &c.,	14,472	4,884	75,504	12,211	107,071
Portugal, &c.,	125	8,487	17,743		26,355
Italy and Sicily,			10,774		10,774
Turkey, Levant, &c.,			81,780		81,780
Hayti,	919	6,100	34,111		41,130
Texas and Mexico,	8,264	106,472	104,613	153	219,502
South America,	267,504	235,669	1,151,165	16,667	1,671,005
West Indies, generally,		43	9		52
Asia, generally,		2,029	183,577		185,606
China,			173,755	14,264	188,019
Africa, generally,	3,988	33,997	84,266	125	120,576
South Seas and Pacific,	1,534	45,373	60,128		107,035
	303,701	450,503	2,324,839	43,503	3,122,546

No. 3. — *Continued.*

MANUFACTURES OF COTTON EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES IN THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1842.

To	Non-enumerated.	Printed and colored.	White.	Twist, &c.	Total.
Swedish West Indies,			\$155		\$155
Danish West Indies,		\$4,356	31,387		35,743
Hanse Towns,		50			50
Holland and dependencies,		930	51,823		53,173
Belgium,	\$420				
England and dependencies,	1,414	10,936	134,015	\$2,554	148,919
France, &c.,	18	123	9,852		9,993
Spain, &c.,	9,765	2,830	188,008	11,474	212,077
Portugal, &c.,		12,850	8,971		21,821
Italy, Sardinia and Sicily,		905	1,648		2,553
Trieste and other Austrian ports,			1,758		1,758
Turkey, Levant, &c.,		3,405	57,273		60,678
Hayti,	185	8,822	26,776		35,783
Texas and Mexico,	14,760	47,418	103,020	1,380	166,578
South America,	220,800	223,373	1,115,636	3,662	1,563,471
West Indies, generally,					
Asia, generally,		22,447	171,109		193,556
China,			337,470		355,725
Africa, generally,	2,800	38,370	44,749	18,255	85,919
South Seas and Pacific,	199	8,225	14,314		22,738
	250,361	385,040	2,297,964	37,325	2,970,690

POST-OFFICE STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1843.

States, &c.	Length of routes.	Total of an- nual trans- portation.	Total of an- nual cost.	Net postage for the year.	Excess of revenue.	Excess of cost.
	<i>Miles.</i>	<i>Miles.</i>				
Maine,	3,941	1,029,511	\$71,447	\$65,831		\$5,616
New Hampshire, .	2,279	655,481	43,998	41,349		2,649
Vermont,	2,404	713,430	46,009	41,383		4,626
Massachusetts, . .	3,373	1,598,081	131,749	246,962	\$115,213	
Rhode Island, . .	338	111,852	10,115	30,474	20,359	
Connecticut, . . .	1,924	770,608	51,371	74,548	23,177	
New York,	13,018	4,778,064	352,329	725,187	372,858	
New Jersey, . . .	2,024	731,321	62,320	46,115		16,215
Pennsylvania, . .	10,328	3,020,862	187,437	334,846	147,409	
Delaware,	619	158,110	8,303	10,396	2,093	
Maryland,	2,335	887,010	147,235	122,787		24,448
District Columbia,				19,572	19,572	
Virginia,	11,740	2,386,460	199,753	148,976		50,777
North Carolina, .	6,945	1,616,510	151,495	47,552		103,943
South Carolina, .	4,400	936,580	122,378	86,613		35,765
Georgia,	6,587	1,448,525	171,671	95,660		76,011
Florida,	1,735	269,884	44,199	14,734		29,465
Ohio,	11,577	2,977,036	194,607	183,445		11,162
Michigan,	3,522	756,702	40,635	41,356	721	
Indiana,	6,362	1,175,692	68,688	45,116		23,572
Illinois,	7,027	1,458,530	121,269	55,343		65,926
Wisconsin,	1,541	195,842	12,234	15,278	3,044	
Iowa,	413	127,192	6,919	9,373	2,454	
Missouri,	7,809	1,386,850	69,081	61,841		7,240
Kentucky,	7,475	1,814,604	130,566	77,727		52,839
Tennessee,	6,761	1,239,040	96,065	59,101		36,966
Alabama,	6,133	1,299,386	218,055	89,149		128,964
Mississippi,	4,478	914,002	95,580	49,734		45,846
Arkansas,	3,372	531,376	53,825	12,819		41,006
Louisiana,	1,825	264,264	37,976	104,261	66,285	
Totals,	142,285	35,252,805	*2,947,319	2,957,528	773,185	762,976

* Cost of transportation, . . \$2,947,319

Expenses of mail agencies, . . 28,965

Together, 2,976,284, the amount stated in the Postmaster
General's report.

No. 5.

SUMMARY STATEMENT, SHOWING THE CONDITION OF THE BANKS, AND THE AMOUNT, ETC., OF THE COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES, FROM THE YEAR 1834.

Years.	BANKS.					
	No.	Loans and discounts.	Specie.	Circulation.	Deposits.	Capital.
1834	506	\$324,119,499		\$94,834,570	\$75,666,986	\$200,005,944
1835	704	365,163,834	\$43,937,625	103,692,495	83,081,365	231,250,337
1836	713	457,506,080	40,019,594	140,301,038	115,104,440	251,875,292
1837	788	525,115,702	37,915,340	149,185,890	127,397,185	290,772,091
1838	829	485,631,687	35,184,112	116,138,910	84,691,184	317,636,778
1839	840	492,278,015	45,132,673	135,170,995	90,240,146	327,132,512
1840*	901	462,896,523	33,105,155	106,968,572	75,696,857	358,442,692
1841						
1842						

Yrs.	COMMERCE.					
	Imports.	Exports.			Balance against U. S.	Balance in favor of U. S.
		Domestic.	Foreign.	Total.		
1834	\$126,521,332	\$81,024,162	\$23,312,811	\$104,336,973	\$22,184,359	
1835	149,895,742	101,189,082	20,504,495	121,693,577	28,202,165	
1836	189,980,035	106,916,680	21,746,360	128,663,040	61,316,995	
1837	140,989,217	95,564,414	21,854,962	117,419,376	23,569,841	
1838	113,717,404	96,033,821	12,452,795	108,486,616	5,230,788	
1839	162,092,132	103,533,891	17,494,525	121,028,416	41,063,716	
1840	107,141,519	113,895,634	18,190,312	132,085,946		\$24,944,427
1841	127,946,177	106,382,722	15,469,081	121,851,803	6,094,374	
1842	100,162,087	92,969,996	11,721,538	104,691,534		4,529,447

Yrs.	REVENUE.					
	Gross revenue from imports, tonnage, &c.	Drawbacks, Bounties, and expenses of collection.	Net revenue.	Expenses of collecting.	Per cent for coll'n on net revenue.	Remarks.
1834	\$18,195,905	\$4,737,794	\$13,458,111	\$1,264,545	9.40	The gross revenue for these 9 years was \$184,329,160; the gross amount of expenses of collection was \$13,163,903, or about 7.14 per cent. on the gross receipts, or 8.83 per cent. on the net revenue.
1835	25,571,966	4,019,694	21,552,272	1,284,997	5.96	
1836	30,681,668	4,355,829	26,325,839	1,397,469	5.31	
1837	17,607,127	4,291,998	13,315,129	1,492,947	11.21	
1838	18,751,589	3,378,351	15,373,238	1,514,633	9.86	
1839	24,521,416	3,960,977	20,560,439	1,724,591	8.39	
1840	13,884,457	3,725,118	10,159,339	1,542,319	15.19	
1841	19,221,018	3,704,429	15,516,589	1,483,960	9.56	
1842	15,894,014	3,113,841	12,780,173	1,458,442	11.40	

* The above table shows the condition of the banks to the year 1840, inclusive, being as far as the official reports have been made respecting banks. The following table exhibits a comparative statement of the condition of a portion of the banks, for the years 1836 and 1844, respectively; showing a very important diminution of the circulation, loans, &c.

BANK MOVEMENTS IN 1836 AND 1844.

States.	1836.				1844.			
	Circulation.	Deposits.	Loans.	Specie.	Circulation.	Deposits.	Loans.	Specie.
New York,	\$21,127,927	\$29,532,616	\$72,826,111	\$6,224,646	\$16,335,401	\$29,026,415	\$65,418,762	\$10,086,542
Massachusetts,	10,892,249	8,784,516	56,643,171	1,455,230	9,219,287	10,213,887	49,993,291	7,298,815
Maine,	2,346,076	1,017,662	6,631,185	207,765	1,606,663	927,498	4,279,331	228,769
New Jersey,	1,755,829	1,139,827	6,700,072	336,132	1,578,635	1,190,880	4,764,720	516,710
Pennsylvania,	41,478,284	24,517,095	130,115,013	14,054,804	6,022,298	9,794,871	16,038,016	6,389,520
Maryland,	3,291,768	4,434,485	13,638,620	1,326,969	1,647,559	3,652,973	7,551,824	3,529,265
District of Columbia,	961,798	1,385,523	3,157,782	643,582	551,279	903,223	1,979,118	1,053,359
Ohio,	9,675,644	6,125,914	17,079,714	2,924,906	2,258,255	567,810	2,872,897	784,316
Kentucky,	3,819,480	1,925,101	8,818,406	1,199,354	1,796,300	635,137	3,051,931	898,998
Missouri,		1,382,262	976,185	371,598	1,073,090	1,220,589	723,570	1,506,257
Georgia,	7,971,587	3,295,930	15,138,142	2,602,595	1,958,392	1,113,471	8,230,140	1,302,757
South Carolina,	7,488,727	4,021,210	16,316,319	2,500,427	1,899,706	1,438,238	4,972,523	741,236
Louisiana,	7,130,546	11,744,712	51,234,158	2,607,587	1,745,546	5,504,085	23,266,193	7,889,099
Indiana,	1,981,650	1,673,887	2,304,083	869,839	2,115,225	200,248	2,640,695	969,306
Virginia,	8,182,763	3,548,414	14,329,680	1,552,528	4,875,239	2,347,862		
	128,104,328	104,529,156	415,309,191	38,877,891	54,393,816	68,834,782	207,277,126	45,355,399

BANKS.					COMMERCE.		
Years.	No.	Loans and discounts.	Specie.	Circulation.	Deposits.	Capital.	
1834		\$61,968,094	\$7,169,949	\$16,199,505	\$20,088,685		
1835		72,826,111	6,224,646	21,127,927	29,539,616		
1836		79,313,188	6,557,020	24,198,000	30,833,479		
Dec. 31, 1837	98	60,999,770	4,139,732	12,432,478	15,895,684	\$37,000,000	
1838	95	68,300,486	6,602,708	19,373,149	18,370,944	37,101,460	
1839	96	68,057,067	7,000,529	14,220,304	20,061,234	36,611,460	
1840	95	54,691,163	5,429,622	15,235,956	17,033,279	36,801,460	
1841	95	54,543,073	5,329,857	13,949,504	17,063,774	36,401,460	
1842	90	52,386,467	8,477,076	12,031,871	19,100,415	36,401,460	
Nov. 1, 1843	134	61,534,129	11,502,789	17,213,101	27,387,160	34,551,460	
Feb. 1, 1844	142	58,444,293	10,086,542	16,335,401	29,026,415	43,369,152	
						43,649,887	

REVENUE FROM CUSTOMS AND EXCISE IN THE KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND EXPENSE OF COLLECTION.				
Banks.	Capital.	Circulation.	Specie.	Deposits.
84 Incorporated,	\$32,391,460	\$13,850,334	\$9,953,270	\$22,743,793
50 Free,	10,977,692	3,362,767	1,549,519	5,231,238
	43,369,152	17,213,101	11,502,789	27,975,031

REVENUE FROM CUSTOMS AND EXCISE IN THE KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND EXPENSE OF COLLECTION.			
Years.	Total receipts.	Total charges.	Rate per cent.
1836	£38,765,091	£2,851,225	7 3-10ths per cent.
1837	36,355,677	2,813,792	7 7-10ths per cent.
1838	36,874,595	2,848,500	7 7-10ths per cent.

The expense of collecting the indirect taxation in France is 16 per cent.
That of collecting the revenue from customs in Austria is 25 per cent.
Do. in the Papal States is 2 3-10ths per cent.
The expense of collecting the indirect taxation in Prussia is 10 per cent.
The expense of collecting the revenue in Mexico is 6 3/4 per cent.

No. 6.

TABLE EXHIBITING THE POPULATION, CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION, AND AMOUNT OF REVENUE COLLECTED IN EACH STATE, ETC. ETC.

States and Territories.	Entire population.	White population.	Free colored population.	Slaves.	
Maine,	501,793	500,438	1,355		266,261
N. Hampshire, .	284,574	284,036	537	1	134,125
Massachusetts, .	737,699	729,030	8,669		325,269
Rhode Island, .	108,830	105,587	3,238	5	48,752
Connecticut, . .	309,978	301,856	8,105	17	138,013
Vermont, . . .	291,948	291,218	730		147,082
New York, . . .	2,428,921	2,378,890	50,027	4	1,223,368
New Jersey, . .	373,306	351,588	21,044	674	184,624
Pennsylvania, .	1,724,033	1,676,115	47,854	64	910,198
Delaware, . . .	78,085	58,561	16,919	2,605	30,932
Maryland, . . .	470,019	318,204	62,078	89,737	163,762
Virginia, . . .	1,239,797	740,968	49,842	448,987	410,899
N. Carolina, . .	753,419	484,870	22,732	245,817	275,185
S. Carolina, . .	594,398	259,084	8,276	327,038	147,421
Georgia, . . .	691,392	407,695	2,753	280,944	246,738
Kentucky, . . .	779,828	590,253	7,317	182,258	347,288
Tennessee, . .	829,210	640,627	5,524	183,059	391,869
Ohio,	1,519,467	1,502,122	17,342	3	853,382
Louisiana, . . .	352,411	158,457	22,502	168,452	79,457
Indiana, . . .	685,866	678,698	7,165	3	310,649
Mississippi, . .	375,651	179,071	1,369	195,21	76
Illinois, . . .	476,183	472,254	3,598	331	
Alabama, . . .	590,756	335,185	2,039	253,53	
Missouri, . . .	383,702	323,888	1,574	58,24	
Arkansas, . . .	97,574	77,174	465	19,93	30,555
Michigan, . . .	212,267	211,560	707		115,371
Dist. of Colum.,	43,712	30,657	8,361	4,694	15,642
Florida Ter., . .	54,477	27,943	817	25,717	13,999
Iowa Ter., . . .	43,112	42,929	172	11	23,468
Wisconsin Ter., .	30,945	30,747	182	16	10,776
	17,063,353	14,189,705	386,293	2,487,355	7,615,646

No. 6. — *Continued.*

States & Territories.			Whites above 20 years of age.	Whites above 20 who cannot read and write.	Proportion of whites above 20 who cannot read and write.	Whites above 20 who can read and write.	No. members of Congress.
ARK.	AMERC.						
Maine, . . .			234,177	3,241	1 in 72 1-4	230,936	7
N. Hampshire, .			149,911	942	1 in 159 1-7	148,969	4
Massachusetts, .			403,761	4,448	1 in 90 3-4	399,313	10
Rhode Island, .			56,835	1,614	1 in 35 1-5	55,221	2
Connecticut, . .			163,843	526	1 in 311 1-2	163,317	4
Vermont, . . .			144,136	2,270	1 in 63 1-2	141,866	4
New York, . . .			1,155,522	44,452	1 in 26	1,111,070	34
New Jersey, . .			166,964	6,385	1 in 26 1-10	160,579	5
Pennsylvania, . .			765,917	33,940	1 in 22 1-2	731,977	24
Delaware, . . .			27,629	4,832	1 in 5 7-10	22,797	1
Maryland, . . .			154,442	11,817	1 in 13	142,625	6
Virginia, . . .			330,069	58,732	1 in 5 6-10	271,337	15
N. Carolina, . .			209,685	56,609	1 in 3 7-10	153,076	9
S. Carolina, . .			111,663	20,615	1 in 5 5-10	91,048	7
Georgia, . . .			160,957	30,717	1 in 5 1-4	130,240	8
Kentucky, . . .			242,965	40,018	1 in 6	202,947	10
Tennessee, . . .			248,758	58,531	1 in 4 1-4	190,227	11
Ohio,			648,740	35,394	1 in 18 1-3	613,346	21
Louisiana, . . .			79,000	4,861	1 in 16 1-4	74,139	4
Indiana,			368,049	38,100	1 in 9 2-3	329,949	10
Mississippi, . .			81,845	8,360	1 in 9 4-5	73,485	4
Illinois,			198,413	27,502	1 in 7 1-5	170,911	7
Alabama,			130,900	22,592	1 in 5 4-5	108,308	7
Missouri,			131,679	19,457	1 in 6 3-4	112,222	5
Arkansas, . . .			46,619	6,567	1 in 7 1-10	40,052	1
Nebraska, . . .			96,189	2,173	1 in 44 1-5	94,016	3
South Dakota, .			15,015	1,033	1 in 14 1-2	13,982	
Florida,			13,944	1,701	1 in 8 1-5	12,243	
Iowa Ter., . . .			19,461	1,118	1 in 17 2-5	18,343	
Wisconsin Ter.,			16,971	1,303	1 in 13	15,668	
OF			6,574,059	549,850	1 in 11 9-10	6,024,209	223

No. 6. — *Continued.*

States and Territories.	White persons above 20 yrs. of age who can read and write represented by each member.	Gross revenue of each state, for the year ending Dec. 31, 1839.	Expenses of collection.	Net revenue for the year 1839.	Excess of expenses over gross revenue.	Amount of revenue to each representative.
Maine,	32,991	\$218,597	\$99,755	\$118,842	\$743	\$16,977
N. Hampshire,	37,242	17,968	18,711			
Massachusetts,	39,931	4,068,955	213,139	3,855,816		385,581
Rhode Island, .	27,610	186,177	36,173	150,004		75,002
Connecticut, .	40,829	193,145	31,436	161,709		40,427
Vermont, . . .	35,466	7,850	9,473		1,623	
New York, . .	32,678	14,141,977	639,604	13,502,373		397,128
New Jersey, . .	32,116	28,305	8,970	19,335		3,867
Pennsylvania, .	30,498	2,899,149	129,367	2,769,782		115,407
Delaware, . . .	22,797	12,977	22,187		9,210	
Maryland, . . .	23,771	1,172,694	126,074	1,046,620		174,454
Virginia, . . .	18,089	294,593	57,685	236,908		15,792
N. Carolina, . .	17,008	17,527	7,460	10,067		1,119
S. Carolina, . .	13,007	657,396	54,620	602,776		86,117
Georgia, . . .	16,280	132,360	41,911	90,449		11,306
Kentucky, . . .	20,294	2,999	336	2,663		266
Tennessee, . .	17,293	42	407		365	
Ohio,	29,207	4,621	5,273		652	
Louisiana, . . .	18,535	1,619,672	106,640	1,513,032		378,008
Indiana, . . .	32,995					
Mississippi, . .	18,372	55	583		528	
Illinois, . . .	24,416					
Alabama, . . .	15,472	79,884	37,112	42,772		6,110
Missouri, . . .	22,444	12,251	519	11,732		2,346
Arkansas, . . .	40,052					
Michigan, . . .	31,339	6,182	11,350		5,168	
Dist. of Columb.,		38,448	10,764	27,684		
Florida Ter., .		55,676	36,227	19,449		
Iowa Ter., . . .						
Wisconsin Ter.,						
	aver. 26,744	25,869,500	1,705,776	24,182,013	18,289	

Gross revenue, \$25,869,500

Expenses of collection, 1,705,776

24,163,724

Net revenue for the year 1839, \$24,182,013

Excess of expenses over gross revenue, 18,289

24,163,724

COUNTIES.	Value of real and personal estate.	Free colored persons.	Number of voters; one-fourth the number of whites over 20 years of age.	Amount which ought to be expended, allowing each teacher 30 scholars, and \$12 for each scholar.	Amount now expended on common schools, allowing \$12 for each scholar.	No. of common schools required, allow'g 30 scholars to a teacher.	Children from 5 to 15 who ought to be at common schools.	Schol's at pub. charge.	Scholars at common schools.	Primary and common schools.	Academies and grammar schools.	Number of colleges.	No. of white persons over 20 who cannot read and write.	Number of white persons over 20 years of age.	Whole number of white persons.
Columbia,	\$9,012,580	1,556	5,292	\$116,616	\$120,888	324	9,718	1	10,074	172	11		1,054	21,169	41,696
Greene,	3,074,968	803	3,554	87,704	38,724	246	7,392	90	3,227	122	3		28	14,218	29,553
Total,	12,087,548	2,449	8,846	204,320	159,612	570	17,110	91	13,301	294	14		1,082	35,387	71,249

No. 6. — Continued.

COUNTIES.	MINES.					AGRICULTURE.										
	Iron.					Granite, marble, &c.		Live stock.					Produce.			
	Tons produced.	Tons of fuel consumed.	Men empl'd.	Capital invested.		Value produced.	Men empl'd.	Capital invested.	Horses and mules.	Neat cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.	Value of poultry.	Bushels of wheat.	Bushels of barley.	Bushels of oats.
Columbia,	1,065	1,372	98	\$51,500		\$10,900	17	\$1,000	9,864	32,699	123,063	54,911	\$29,606	28,249	1,971	1,107,702
Greene,	185	330	38	24,000					5,561	22,945	89,826	19,357	14,820	17,677	2,368	309,882
Total,	1,250	1,702	136	75,500		10,900	17	1,000	15,425	55,644	162,889	74,268	43,926	45,926	4,339	1,417,584

No. 6. — *Continued.*

COUNTIES.	FORESTS.			FISHERIES.					MANUFACTURES.							
	Value of lumber produced.	Men employed.	Ginseng, and all other products of the forest.	Gallons of sperm oil.	Gallons of whale and other oil.	Value of whalebone, &c.	Men employed.	Capital.	Machinery.		Small arms.		Various metals.		Granite.	
									Value produced.	Men employed.	No. made.	Men.	Amount produced.	Men.	Value produced.	Man.
Columbia.	\$8,400			37,075	277,200	\$147,800	304	\$330,000	\$72,500	58	195	5			\$500	1
Greene.	3,400								42,940	42	175	1				
Total.	6,800	33	24,000	37,075	277,200	147,800	304	330,000	115,440	100	370	6	38,800	53	500	1

No. 6. — *Continued.*

MANUFACTURES.													
COUNTIES.	Bricks and lime.		Capital in the foregoing manufactures.		Wool.			Cotton.			Silk.		
	Value produced.	Men employed.			Value of goods made.	Men employed.	Capital invested.	Value of goods made.	Men.	Capital.	Goods made.	Men.	Capital.
Columbia, .	\$8,100	27	\$30,350		\$139,000	181	\$93,450	\$475,440	760	\$893,300	\$85	5	\$500
Greene, . .	126,170	399	146,625		26,900	35	37,400	4,160	9	6,000	60	4	2,000
Total, . . .	134,270	426	176,975		165,900	216	130,850	479,600	769	899,300	145	9	2,500

No. 6. — Continued.

MANUFACTURES.													
COUNTIES.	Drugs, paints and dyes.			Earthen ware.			Paper.			Printing and binding.			
	Value produced.	Men employed.	Capital.	Value produced.	Men employed.	Capital.	Value produced.	Men employed.	Capital.	Weekly newspapers.	Periodicals.	Men employed.	Capital.
Columbia, . .	\$8,800	8	\$1,000	\$12,282	21	\$11,000	\$9,500	16	\$18,000	3	2	18	\$7,600
Greene, . . .	6,300	9	4,000				35,000	27	39,000	3		14	49,000
Total, . . .	15,100	17	5,000	12,282	21	11,000	44,500	43	57,000	6	2	32	56,600

No. 6. — Continued.

COUNTIES.	MANUFACTURES.												
	Carriages and wagons.			Mills.					Value of ships and vessels built.		Furniture.		
	Value produced.	Men employed.	Capital.	Flouring-mills.	Bbls. of flour produced.	Grist-mills.	Saw-mills.	Value produced.	Men employed.	Capital invested.	Value produced.	Men employed.	Capital.
Columbia, . .	\$76,450	182	\$52,650	12	18,250	39	41	\$70,275	32	\$196,200	\$42,000	80	\$16,400
Greene, . . .	27,239	60	22,010	3	1,503	29	79	126,265	177	143,300	36,600	108	17,200
Total, . . .	103,689	242	74,660	15	19,753	68	120	196,540	239	339,500	78,600	188	33,600

BANKS IN COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK, FEB. 1, 1844.

Name of bank.	Loans and discounts.	Specie.	Capital.	Circulation.	Deposits.
Hudson River,	\$237,264	\$8,894	\$150,000	\$149,710	\$50,616
Farmers' Bank, Hudson, . .	109,406	5,501	135,450	70,002	66,819
Bank of Kinderhook, . . .	66,779	4,189	125,000	53,282	41,199
Total,	413,449	18,584	410,450	272,994	158,634

BANKS IN GREENE COUNTY, NEW YORK.

Catskill Bank,	\$160,184	\$6,041	\$150,000	\$82,524	\$60,778
Farmers' Bank,	194,791	4,038	100,000	120,815	43,567
Prattsville Bank,	99,718	4,000	100,000	78,883	7,841
New York Stock Bank, . .	2,370	1,504	44,000	43,150	6,140
Total,	457,063	15,583	394,000	325,372	118,326

SUMMARY.

Banks in Columbia county, .	\$413,449	\$18,584	\$410,450	\$272,994	\$158,634
Banks in Greene county, .	457,063	15,583	394,000	325,372	118,326
Total,	870,512	34,167	804,450	598,366	276,960

DISTRIBUTION OF THE INCOME OF THE LITERATURE FUND.

\$40,000 of the income of the literature fund of the State of New York, for the year 1843, was divided among the different academies, &c., on the 27th February, 1844; and the following seminaries, &c., in Columbia and Greene counties, received as stated below:

Columbia county, Claverack Academy,	\$163.66
Hudson Academy,	150.30
Kinderhook Academy,	400.80
	\$714.76
Greene county, Cocksackie Academy,	26.72
Greenville Academy,	123.58
	150.30
	856.06

REPORT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A STATISTICAL BUREAU.*

THE developments of public sentiment within the last year have indicated a lively interest excited among reflecting men by the project submitted to your honorable body in the resolution under which the first committee on this subject was organized, at the last session of Congress. Rarely, indeed, has any measure of the kind been productive of more extended and approving comment by citizens capable of appreciating the importance of the subject. It would be derogatory to the character of the American people to suppose that statistical researches and reports should meet with less favor in the United States than is bestowed upon them in the monarchies of Europe; but your committee are highly gratified in being able to state that the degree of popularity which has followed the *project* of a statistical bureau as a part of our government furnishes satisfactory evidence that the intelligent freemen of our country are ready in this, as in all other cases, to approve of any reasonable expenditure for promoting a correct knowledge of the multitudinous facts concerning the interests and resources of every state in our republican confederacy. Results would richly repay all expense incurred in this matter.

Your committee deem it proper, in this connection, to bring in review some of the numerous reasons presented last year, in the course of the report approving the project of a Statistical Bureau.

* 28th Congress, Second Session. House of Representatives, No. 110. Feb. 7th, 1845. — Report of the select committee appointed on the 7th of January on the subject of statistical information, and to whom was referred the letter from the Secretary of the Treasury upon the same subject.

Those reasons are now again respectfully submitted for the consideration of Congress, in connection with the present efforts for giving greater efficiency to the movement on this subject, for creating what may properly be termed a *Bureau of Statistics*, with adequate means to promote the objects which led to its creation, instead of the very restricted plan which was adopted last year, on account of the deficiency of means furnished by the simple provision for allowing the employment of a single extra clerk (at fifteen hundred dollars) to attend to this important duty. The bill now before the house contemplates the appropriation of reasonable salaries for several officers competent to the discharge of duty in this valuable branch of the public offices ; and your committee fervently invoke the attention of gentlemen who have not yet fully reflected on the subject to the reasons herewith submitted (and many others might be enumerated) for sustaining the proposition for rendering the organization of the *Bureau of Statistics* more consonant with the important matters committed to its charge,—matters which require a high order of intellect, and much intelligence and zeal, on the part of all employed about the business of that bureau. We repeat what was stated last year, when this subject was first presented for your consideration in the resolution for a Bureau of Statistics, that,

1. By furnishing correct and official information relating to *all* the great interests of the country, it would prevent unintentional partial legislation in favor of *one or more*, to the injury of the *rest*. The knowledge which such a bureau would annually present would form the safest basis for both national and state legislation.

2. It would facilitate legislation, by supplying ready information to the national legislature upon all subjects on which it might wish to act. The replies given to all calls for information would be *prompt* ; and, when compared with those which are now obtained, after weeks or months of delay, they would be found to be more

complete and accurate, more compact and better digested, giving the information sought in a smaller compass and more convenient shape. Thus, correct and ready information would be furnished to the inquirer; the hurry and inconvenience, and often injurious delay to the regular work of the departments, would be avoided; and the public service be promoted, by a more ready and accurate despatch of public business.

3. The establishment of such a bureau would greatly facilitate the business of the departments, by enabling the respective officers thereof to ascertain, by a brief inspection, the absolute and relative condition of every interest, the amount of every source of revenue, and every object of expenditure; and every question which the duties of their office, the wishes of the legislature, or the interests of the public, might prompt, would receive a ready and correct reply.

4. Such a bureau would, in a comparatively short time, furnish correct information respecting the commercial, financial, the navigating and shipping, the manufacturing, and the agricultural interests of the country; a digested body of facts relative to the revenue, the custom-house, the post-office, the land-office, and the Indian department; correct statements respecting the population, the expenses and details of the army and navy, the progress of internal improvements, the state of banks and other institutions, and of monetary affairs and exchanges; and, in short, a regular, connected, and methodized arrangement of every subject to which facts and figures bear any relation, and which are in any way connected with the history, the progress, and condition of the nation at large, and those of the various states and territories. And here it may be remarked, that, by a full and complete arrangement of the prices of stocks, the rates of exchanges, the quantity of unemployed capital (as exhibited by the amount of deposits in banks, and other variations in the money market), the best opportunities

for the execution of government financial operations would be ascertained, and materially promoted.

5. The duties of the bureau would extend to the arrangement, condensation and elucidation, of the *statistics of foreign nations*, and to all the various branches of *international commercial intercourse*. Materials for this part of the business are daily accumulating, especially from consuls, and other public agents abroad. The information contained in the various documents received is always of importance, and often of the highest value ; but it is now only of partial service to the legislature and the public, by its not being methodized and arranged ; and the various insulated facts are rendered valueless, for want of collocation and juxtaposition.

6. The labors of a Statistical Bureau would most essentially contribute to the increase of sound knowledge upon all subjects connected with national and international affairs among the people. The theories (often conflicting) of political economists would give place to the practical results of experience, the sober truths of figures, and the unerring demonstrations of facts. The true interests of the people of the country, as a people *one and indivisible*, would be perceived and understood. Knowledge of the most important kind would be given to the community ; additional power, the result of knowledge, would be placed in the hands of the legislature ; the welfare of the country would be advanced, by its interests being better understood ; and legislation would be consistent and onwards, uniformly conducing to individual happiness, and national honor and prosperity. It is hoped that nations will no longer seek to conquer by war or physical force, but by an honorable rivalry in the cultivation of the arts of peace, of commerce, of agriculture, of manufactures, and of science. Practical and useful information must be furnished to our people, to enable them to compete with other nations in this laudable career. The object of the bureau would be to furnish this information, and thus place the

materials for sound thought, and the foundation for correct action, within the grasp of every American citizen.

Holding these sentiments in reference to the importance of a Bureau of Statistics,—sentiments that are strengthened by the reflections and experience of the last year,—your committee conclude, for the present, by expressing their warm approbation of the bill now before your honorable body, for placing this bureau on something like an adequate foundation. Yet they cannot take leave of the subject, even temporarily, without invoking your special attention to the letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, which is herewith submitted, as a part of this report.

{ DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY,
{ January 6, 1845.

To the honorable the members of the Senate and of the House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled :

At the last session of the Congress, the honorable Mr. Pratt, of the State of New York, with a spirit worthy that great state, introduced in the House of Representatives a joint resolution, which was approved on the 15th June, 1844, in the words following :

“ Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby, authorized to transfer from any office or offices of the treasury department, from which their services may, in his opinion, be dispensed with, three or more clerks, to be employed, under his direction, in collecting, arranging and classifying, such statistical information as may be procured, showing, or tending to show, each year, the con-

dition of the agriculture, manufactures, domestic trade, currency, and banks, of the several states and territories of the United States. The clerks which may be transferred and employed under this authority shall receive the same salaries as at present. And a report, containing the results of the information obtained upon the before-mentioned subjects, shall be annually made to Congress by the Secretary of the Treasury, on the first Monday of January."

In the general appropriation of the 17th June, 1844, the sum of fifteen hundred dollars was provided for the employment of a clerk qualified to conduct and execute the statistical compilations and returns required by the joint resolution before quoted.

In obedience to the joint resolution and the appropriation, clerks were employed to execute the work. The result of their labors is herewith most respectfully communicated to Congress.

The benefits which would be derived from a Statistical Bureau, well organized and conducted, are manifold.

The want of a statistical work, well executed, has been felt in legislating for the Union.

In the execution of a statistical work, time, money, and a high order of intellect, are necessary. Individual exertion and private resources cannot compel the necessary information. Such a work properly belongs to the government, having the power to command the collection of the facts, and the ability to pay for the talents and time necessary to the due execution. It is, with the most respectful deference to Congress, suggested by the Secretary of the Treasury to their consideration, whether the resolution before quoted be not too limited in its objects, and too scant in the means, to enable the secretary to cause a statistical work to be executed sufficiently comprehensive and useful, worthy of the government and its purposes, and suited to the majesty of the people of the United States.

The resolution confines the information to be collected to the

agriculture, manufactures, domestic trade, currency, and banks of the United States. It is respectfully recommended that the information be enlarged to the foreign trade, foreign manufactures, foreign agriculture, foreign products, foreign currency, and foreign regulations and restrictions of commerce.

All these subjects, domestic and foreign, seem to fall within the circle of knowledge useful, necessary and proper, for the legislators, statesmen, and people of the United States.

In a country like ours, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial, our interests are deeply concerned in having the best attainable information of all that relates to our own soil, and its products, natural and artificial; the products of industry, our surplus and our wants, as well as the products of foreign soils and climates, foreign industry, foreign wants, foreign surplus, foreign modes of conveyance, foreign prices of labor, foreign coins and currency, foreign laws imposing duties on imports and exports, and the annual consumption of foreign nations of those articles not the growth or product of their respective territories. An accurate knowledge of those will enable our merchants to pursue their commercial enterprises more advantageously, and the Congress and the Executive of the United States more effectually to counteract the rivalry and injurious policy of foreign nations in respect to our own trade and commerce and domestic industry. These subjects are intimately connected with our national prosperity, and national wealth.

Six enumerations of the population of the United States have been taken, connecting therewith other facts relating to the resources, industry, and wealth of the states and territories; yet, heretofore, those materials have remained, comparatively, in a rude and undigested heap, inconvenient and inaccessible, unless by great expense of time and labor to legislators, statesmen, philosophers, and philanthropists.

The various subjects before alluded to would properly fall under the cognizance of a Statistical Bureau; and if well appointed, and with means to enable the secretary to collect the necessary information, and to purchase books relating to the proper duties and subjects of the bureau, it would be eminently useful.

To enumerate the various duties to be confided to a Statistical Bureau, and explain *in extenso* the many benefits and advantages to result from such an establishment, would protract this communication to an unreasonable length. Some of the most prominent objects and benefits have been noticed; the collected wisdom of the Congress will supply the rest.

The multifarious duties of the Secretary of the Treasury require an unremitted assiduity, leaving only time for a general superintendence and direction of the objects and labors of a Statistical Bureau. It is, therefore, of great importance that the head of such a bureau be a man of genius, cultivation, experience, and judgment, and that the clerks be of capacities and turn of thought adapted to the business. All men are not fit for all things.

From that which has been done, in the short space of six months, by the clerks to whom the duties have been assigned, under the resolution of the 15th June, 1844, laboring under disadvantages of a first entry into the business, an argument may be drawn in favor of the very great convenience and benefits which may be expected, in the progress of time, to the Congress, to the executive, and to the people, from the matured works of a Statistical Bureau, operating from time to time in collecting general and special facts, enlarging, revising, correcting and improving, the sum of information.

The nations of Europe — France and Great Britain in particular — have adopted the wise policy of collecting, arranging and classifying, all matters which can minister to the knowledge of their national commerce, national wealth and national prosperity.

An examination of the French and British works on general and special statistics will demonstrate the utility of an establishment by the government of the United States devoted to inquiries relating to the population, agriculture, manufactures, mines, minerals, internal and external commerce, banks and currency, of the United States, as primary subjects of knowledge, and as connected with similar interests in every quarter of the globe.

In the preparation for the press, and in the publications, heretofore, of the data collected in taking the census, great expense has been incurred in printing the information in an unwieldy and unsatisfactory manner.

Under the management of a Statistical Bureau, the future materials collected in the after-enumerations may be published in a convenient, well-digested form, to the saving of expense.

The Secretary of the Treasury is led to the conclusion that a Statistical Bureau, properly organized and supported, will be able to respond promptly and correctly to all calls by the Congress for information on statistical subjects, save great waste of time and money, and furnish information highly interesting and useful to the great body of the people.

A parsimonious policy in the establishment will greatly diminish, if not defeat, the utility of the works of the bureau, and demean them in comparison with the statistical works of other nations.

To obtain the services of a competent bureau, it is respectfully suggested that the Secretary of the Treasury be authorized, in execution of the purposes of the resolution, to appoint a chief of the bureau, with an annual salary of three thousand dollars; two clerks, with an annual salary of two thousand dollars each; and one clerk, with an annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars. These four to compose the bureau, to be conducted under the control and superintendence of the Secretary of the Treasury, with a moderate

sum annually for the purchase of statistical works, and for contingent expenses.

In conclusion, the Secretary of the Treasury has to remark, that this branch of knowledge, so interesting, so important, and so eagerly desired, remains, as yet, in the United States, veiled in obscurity and mystery. Private fortunes and private means will not — the Congress can, if they will — cause light to shine through the darkness.

All which is most respectfully submitted to the collected wisdom of the Congress.

GEORGE M. BIBB,

Secretary of the Treasury.

General and
 Government by
 relating
 minerals,
 United

REPORT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF STATISTICS.*

IN the opinion of the committee, the propriety of sustaining the Bureau of Statistics, by placing it on a more liberal footing, is strongly illustrated by the course of discussion which now prevails throughout the whole land concerning sundry important territorial questions. In this discussion, frequent reference is made to matters already and the Bureau of Statistics, when properly organized on a liberal basis, would be able to furnish facts for the ready examination of the representatives of the people, and for diffusion throughout the various sections of the Union, in the printed reports of Congressional commissions. And it is under these circumstances, with a consideration of the utility of the measure impressed more strongly upon the public mind by the important discussions now daily transpiring around Congress, that your committee would most earnestly invoke the aid and action of Congress in sustenance of the Statistical Bureau to the manner commensurate with the interests and character of our common country; the very limited provision made last year being insufficient for the purpose contemplated.

By way of illustrating their views of the importance of a permanent inquiry concerning the permanent interests of the people, your committee respectfully and with the purpose of enforcing the necessity of thorough organization to statistics when legislating on questions concerning the chief interests of different sections of the United States, your committee would suggest the following: two

* 28th Congress, second session, House of Representatives, No. 186, p. 10. These
 1845. — Report of the select committee, to whom was referred the subject of the
 Statistical Bureau, established in connection with the treasury department, and
 authority of Congress, at its last session; and also upon the subject of the
 generally.

sum annual to believe that they cannot promote their objects more
gent expenst this time than by inviting the attention of Congress

In conclments herewith submitted, on the subject of national
this branch applicable to important national questions, and as sup-
desired, round basis for correct and permanent national legislation.
and mys all the various important applications of statistical
Congress, there is none where it would prove more preëminently
ness. n in the case of sectional differences arising from sup-

All whicting interests. In a great confederacy like the United
of the Co ending into such a variety of climates, and embracing
ersity of soils, productions and employments, and con-
it does, social and domestic institutions varying in their
l relation, and induced by peculiarity of circumstances,
onal questions cannot fail to be frequently occurring.

er these questions do occur, it is not saying too much to
: a reference to such statistical information as applies to
on at issue would, if it did not at once remove every dif-
misapprehension in which it originated, furnish such a
orrect and equitable national legislation as would heal
al differences, draw tighter the bonds which unite us as
nd promote, in a most essential manner, the happiness
sperity of every part of the Union.

certainly no question arising out of these sectional dif-
such perpetually annoying recurrence as that of slavery,
umstances caused by, and arising from, the existence
ition of society in a part of the Union.

mittee wish to call the attention of the house to what may
the statistics of slavery,—not to the moral, intellect-
sical condition of the slave, for that would be travelling
phere of their legitimate duties,—but such an examina-
omparison of the statistics of the slaveholding and non-
ing portions of the Union as may remove much prejudice,

error and misapprehension, and prevent, for the future, much of that spirit of hostility and unkindness, and those feelings of irritability and morbid sensitiveness, which pervade even the halls of our national legislature, when any allusion is made to the subject.

The committee have no sectional feelings to gratify, no party principles to promote, no personal interests to advance. The section they represent is the territory of the United States, from east to west, and from north to south; the party they espouse is the American people, "one and indivisible;" the personal interests they contend for are those which belong to every American citizen.

They wish to show the importance of statistical knowledge, by giving an example of its application to a subject of the highest national importance, and thus add another argument in favor of the establishment of the Bureau of Statistics, the commencement of which they have recommended.

If a survey be taken of the various circumstances, relations, interests, products, population, &c., of the United States, dividing it into sections of north and south, and determining the division line between them by the existence and the permitted continuance of slavery on one side of that line, and the operation of state laws either against its existence or its continuance on the other, certain results will be arrived at. This line of demarcation, and the principle which determines it, are not assumed for any invidious purpose, or as the ground of disparaging calculations. The question of *slavery* or *no slavery* appears to have been adopted as the slogan shout of both parties, and almost every political question is made to turn upon it. Any allusion to it on the floor of Congress operates like an electrical shock through the entire body of legislators. The annexation of Texas to the Union will be advocated or opposed with an ultimate, if not an avowed, reference to this question. Its discussion has more than once endangered the peace and the integrity of the Union; its operation, at the present, is inimical

to calm and dispassionate legislation ; its tendency, in the future, may be to produce results which the patriot sighs to contemplate, and the philanthropist shudders to anticipate.

And yet, were the matter left to adjust itself by the simple but most efficacious laws by which Providence, in its wisdom and its goodness, calls principles into operation, and directs them to their salutary results,—would men calmly use the reason with which God has endowed them,—would they pursue the right, and abandon the expedient,—would they curb their passions, their tempers and their selfishness,—this at present all-absorbing and dangerously exciting question would, in a comparatively short time, resolve itself by a very peaceable, simple and satisfactory solution.

More of this in the sequel. At present, let facts speak for themselves ; and the statistics of the two sections, and the conclusions to be drawn from them, show how far the north is independent of the south, and how far the south is independent of the north,—not for any purpose of teaching either section how it can best do without the other, but in order that *both* may be convinced that the *true policy of both* is to abandon denunciation, threatening and unkindness, and to adopt the language of moderation and courtesy. Let each portion regard the other as a member of the same family, each necessary for the preservation of the best interests of the other, and both as component parts of a fair, free and happy republic, upon whose progress the eyes of the whole civilized world are turned, and upon whose failure to realize the truth of the principles of government which they have adopted, the enemies of freedom throughout the world would rejoice, and the realization of the best hopes of mankind be postponed for centuries.

Now, first, as to the extent and population of these two sections of the United States.

The non-slaveholding states (or what, in these observations, will hereafter be termed the *northern* states) are Maine, New

Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, and the territories of Iowa and Wisconsin. They contain, in round numbers, a surface of 661,200 square miles. The slaveholding states (or what will hereafter be termed the *southern* states) are, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri and Arkansas; to which add the territory of Florida and the District of Columbia. This section contains a surface of 627,400 square miles.

The northern states had, in 1840, a population of 9,807,007 persons; of whom 3734 were slaves, and 187,644 free colored persons.

The southern states had, in 1840, a population of 7,256,346 persons; of whom 2,483,621 were slaves, and 198,649 free colored people.

There were, therefore, 9,615,629 white persons in the northern states, and 4,574,076 in the southern states.*

The power of the two sections, therefore, as represented by their respective white populations in 1840,—and population certainly forms an important element, and is evidently the foundation of physical power,—was as 9,615,629 to 4,574,076; that is, the power of the northern states was to that of the southern states as

* The following statements have relation to this part of the subject; they show the white population of the two sections, according to the several censuses:

	1790.	1800.	1810.	1820.	1830.	1840.
Northern States...	1,900,976	2,651,337	3,708,580	5,085,653	6,925,953	9,615,629
Southern States...	1,271,488	1,653,128	2,153,434	2,787,058	3,603,157	4,574,076
Total.....	3,172,464	4,304,465	5,862,014	7,872,711	10,529,110	14,189,705
Proportion of whites in the north and south,	1.49 to 1	1.60 to 1	1.72 to 1	1.82 to 1	1.92 to 1	2.10 to 1

21 to 10. The militia returns, however, as stated in the Army Register for 1841, do not agree with this ratio. They give the number of militia in the northern states as 903,211, those in the southern states as 600,741,—being only about 15 to 10.

But other elements, besides mere physical force, enter into the attribute of power; and of these, knowledge, mental energy, climate as affecting health and longevity, the soil as affecting production, individual and collective industry, commercial enterprise, mechanical skill, public institutions, and personal conduct, are among the most influential.

Although knowledge is more the result and the consequence of education than education itself, and there are many men of great practical knowledge who have not received much education, still, generally speaking, the quantity of knowledge in any country will be in proportion to the degree of education possessed by its inhabitants; and this amount of education will be in proportion to the means of instruction afforded, and is to be estimated by its practical results, as exhibited in morals and in manners, in scientific and literary advances, and in civilization and refinement. “The motives for giving knowledge a wide diffusion are peculiarly strong in this country, where, the people being the sole source of political power, all legislation and measures of public policy must, in a greater or less degree, reflect the opinions and feelings of the great mass of the community, and be wise and liberal, or weak and narrow-minded, according to the character of those by whose suffrages authority is given and is taken away. If the body of the people be not instructed and intelligent, how can they understand their true interests,—how feel the paramount obligations of law, order, justice and public faith?” *

The number of universities and colleges in the northern states,

* Tucker's Progress of the United States.

in 1843, was 87; with 9150 students, and 41 libraries, containing 361,348 volumes. The number in the southern states was 86, with 7083 students, 39 libraries, and 205,807 volumes. Nothing can be deduced from these data to show the number of persons in each section of the country who receive a collegiate education; for many of the students in the northern colleges are the sons of citizens of the southern states; and the same may be said of the medical, law, and theological schools, established in the two sections. It may be mentioned here, however, that the northern states have 15 medical, 29 theological, and 5 law schools, containing in the aggregate 3324 students, with 21 libraries attached thereto, containing together 101,810 volumes.

The southern states have 13 medical, 9 theological, and 3 law schools, with 1529 students, and 7 libraries, containing together 21,800 volumes.

In the northern states there are state and other libraries containing 227,100 volumes; in the southern states, libraries containing 114,500 volumes; being as 1 to 1.06 in favor of the southern states.

It is to the academies, grammar schools, and primary schools of the two sections of the country, that we must look for the means of comparing the facilities for education afforded for each, and the extent, so far as numbers go, to which education is received. It may be supposed that the children receiving instruction at these schools are between the ages of five and fifteen. Referring to the census for 1840, we find that there were at that time 2,460,126 white children between the ages of five and fifteen in the northern states, and 1,266,954 children of the same description in the southern states. The same document informs us that there were at that time 41,017 academies, grammar and primary schools, with 2,192,949 scholars, in the northern states; and 9448 academies, grammar and primary schools, with 284,757 scholars, in the south-

ern states. Also, that there were 208,638 white persons over twenty years of age who could not read and write, or about one in every $22\frac{1}{10}$ of the entire number of persons of that description in the northern states; and 341,267, or about one in every $5\frac{3}{4}$ in the southern states. These facts premised, the statistics of education for the two sections will be as follows:

In the northern or free states, there is one academy, grammar or primary school, for every 60 children between five and fifteen years of age. In the southern or slave states, there is one academy, grammar or primary school, for every 134 children between the same ages—being more than two to one in favor of the former.

In the northern states, out of 2,460,126 children between five and fifteen years of age, 2,192,949 attend at the academies, grammar and primary schools; leaving 267,177 who do not attend any place of public instruction, or about $10\frac{9}{10}$ per cent. In the southern states, out of 1,266,954 children between five and fifteen years of age, 284,757 only attend at the academies, grammar and primary schools; leaving 982,197 who do not attend some place of public instruction, or about $77\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. A large portion of these, however, either receive their education at the northern academies, and consequently reduce, by their numbers, the proportions above stated as existing in that section, or else receive education at home, or by private tuition; for, in 1840, only 341,267 white persons above twenty years of age could not read and write.

Now, with respect to another branch of popular instruction (the newspaper and periodical press), the census of 1840 furnishes the following information: In the northern states, there were then 82 *daily* and 901 other *newspapers* and 178 *periodicals* issued; or one newspaper or periodical for every 8282 white persons. In the southern states, there were 51 *daily* and 365 other *news-*

papers and 48 *periodicals* published; or one newspaper or periodical for every 9857 white persons.

Knowledge and mental power and energy can only be estimated by their results, and we do not possess many means of ascertaining these results. The relative inventive genius of the two sections, however, receives some illustration from the fact that citizens of the northern states took out, in the year 1842, 434 *patents* for inventions and improvements in arts, sciences, manufactures and machinery, or one for about every 10,157 white persons above twenty years of age who could read and write. And the southern states took out 71 *patents*, or one for every 22,759 persons of a similar description — being a little more than two to one in favor of the northern states. In 1843, the northern states took out 450 *patents*; the southern, 63.

If we look to the subject of *internal improvement*, as exhibited by the extent of railroads and canals, we find that, in the year 1840, according to Mr. Tanner's statement, there was in the northern states a length of railroads and canals amounting to

6.298 miles.

And in the southern states a length of . . . 2.931 “

Making a total of . . . 9.229 “

And the relative amounts are very nearly in proportion to the white population of the two sections; but, as respects surface of country, two to one in favor of the northern states.

A list of about 600 *American authors* is given in the American Almanac for 1840, of whom about 140 were natives of, or connected with, the southern states. This list includes persons born as far back as the year 1600, and therefore does not afford a fair criterion to judge respecting the two sections in question,—a great portion of each having been first inhabited by white persons within these last fifty years. Could this crite-

tion be obtained, it is very probable, judging from what we do know, that each section would be found to possess very nearly its fair proportion.

If we separate the population of the two sections into their various professions and employments, we obtain the following data :

	Mining.	Agriculture.	Commerce.	Manufactures.	Ocean navigation.	Internal navigation.	Learned professions.
Northern States,	10,353	1,751,100	80,658	607,771	51,439	22,605	45,162
Southern States,	4,858	*1,968,851	36,949	183,978	4,582	10,471	20,093
Total,	15,211	3,719,951	117,607	791,749	56,021	33,076	65,255

* Deduct for slave labor, 1,074,258.

The white persons in the northern states being 9,615,629, and those in the southern states 4,574,076, we are enabled to make the following deductions :

That the persons employed in mining in the northern states are, to those employed in the southern states, when compared with their respective white populations, in the proportion of

1.07 to 1.06

Those employed in agriculture, as . . . 1 to $1\frac{1}{4}$

Those employed in commerce, as . . . $1\frac{1}{2\frac{1}{3}}$ to 1

Those employed in manufactures, as . . . $1\frac{7}{10}$ to 1

Those employed in navigating the ocean, as . . . $5\frac{1}{3}$ to 1

Those employed in internal navigation, as . . . 2.35 to 2.29

Those engaged in the learned professions, as . . . 47 to 44

These results are given as statistical facts. No particular inference can be drawn from them, excepting that the *mass* of the population of the southern or slave states are more decidedly an agricultural people than those of the other section ; whilst the people of the northern or free states reverse the rule as to manu-

factures and navigation of the ocean. In the other avocations, the proportions are nearly according to their respective white populations. What effect these variations may have on the character of the respective communities, is more the province of the moralist and philosopher, than that of the political statist, to determine.

The census does not afford the means of determining exactly how many white males above the age of twenty are not included in these industrious and productive classes,—the persons employed being classed in that document without distinction of age, sex or condition. We may, however, approximate sufficiently near, for all practical purposes, to a solution of this inquiry, by adopting the mode proposed at page 139 of Professor Tucker's "Progress of the United States." He supposes that two-fifths of the slaves and free colored population are employed in field-labor. Also, that out of the 109,612 persons employed in manufactures of cotton and other woven fabrics, one-half, or 54,806, are white females. Also, that the number of white males under twenty years of age, included in the industrious classes, is 575,519. Taking these numbers as the data of our calculations, we arrive at the following results :

	Persons.
In the northern states, there are employed in the productive classes, and in the learned professions,	2,569,088
Deduct females employed in manufactures,	54,806
proportion of 575,519 males under 20,	308,185
two-fifths of 188,004 free blacks,	75,200
	————— 438,191
Employed in industrious classes, &c.,	2,130,897
White males above 20 years of age,	2,308,259
	—————
Leaving not so employed,	177,362
or about 1 in 13, or $7\frac{7}{10}$ per cent.	

In the southern states, there are employed in the productive classes and in the learned professions,	2,229,782
Deduct proportion of 575,519 males under 20,	267,334
two-fifths of free blacks (198,289), or,	79,316
two-fifths of 2,487,355 slaves,	994,942
	————— 1,341,592
Employed in industrious classes, &c.,	888,190
White females above 20 years of age,	978,770
Leaving not so employed,	90,580
or 1 in about $10\frac{1}{5}$, or $9\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.	

This calculation shows that the unproductive classes of the northern states are, to those of the southern, as $7\frac{7}{10}$ to $9\frac{1}{4}$, or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. greater in the latter than the former.

So much for the education, means of acquiring knowledge, mental energy, mechanical skill, and industrious and productive habits, of the two sections of the Union.

With respect to the climate of the northern and southern states, as affecting health and longevity, we have but few data on which to regulate our decisions. Partial returns from cities or districts, and those relating only to short periods and particular seasons, will not direct us aright. The following tables, compiled from the census for 1840, may be of some service in this respect :

WHITE POPULATION.

	Northern States.	Southern States.	Total.	Per ct. N. States.	Per ct. S. States.
Under 5 years,	1,590,400	883,662	2,474,062	16.53	19.33
5 to 10 "	1,319,848	691,142	2,010,990	13.73	15.11
10 to 15 "	1,140,278	575,882	1,716,160	11.86	12.58
15 to 20 "	1,059,585	488,744	1,548,329	11.00	10.69
20 to 30 "	1,775,082	800,961	2,576,043	18.45	17.54
30 to 40 "	1,151,845	493,727	1,645,572	12.00	10.79
40 to 50 "	731,107	307,682	1,038,789	7.60	6.73
50 to 60 "	440,500	178,890	619,390	4.58	3.90
60 to 70 "	249,719	97,848	347,567	2.60	2.14
70 to 80 "	119,787	40,845	160,632	1.25	0.89
80 to 90 "	34,215	11,424	45,639	0.356	0.250
90 to 100 "	3,877	1,863	5,740	0.040	0.041
Over 100 "	383	409	792	0.004	0.009

The greatest discrepancy in the above table is in the proportion of persons above one hundred years of age, which in the southern states is more than double that in the northern ones, in proportion to their respective population. A greater discrepancy, however, in this respect, existed in 1830; when, according to the census then taken, the proportion of white persons above one hundred years of age in the southern states was as 3.42 to 1, compared with the number in the northern states.

The following mode has been adopted, in order to arrive at some tolerably correct ideas as to the salubrity of the climate, and the healthiness and longevity of the inhabitants of the northern and southern sections.

The number of persons (whites) in each section of the Union, of the various ages, as detailed in the census, has been multiplied by the average age of each class,—say those under five by two and one-half, those from five to ten by seven and one-half, and so on to the last term. The entire amount of these products was then divided by the whole number of white persons, and the quotient taken as the average age of all white persons living in the respective sections at the time the census was taken.

By this rule, the average age of the white persons living in the northern states when the census of 1840 was taken was

	22.567 years.
That of those living in the southern states was	20.711 “
The average of the whole country was	21.970 “

Thus the population of the southern states was found to be 1.259 below the average age of the whole country, and 1.856 years below that of the population of the northern states.

With respect to the relative salubrity of each section, and the quantity of health enjoyed by its inhabitants, we have no facts on which to base an opinion. Each portion has its advantages and disadvantages; each its peculiar diseases; and each is sought by the inhabitants of the other for a remedial change of air and

climate. The people of the north are evidently the more hardy and robust, and probably enjoy more of uninterrupted health, bodily vigor, and physical power, than those of the south. But these are general inferences, the correctness of which must hereafter be decided upon according to the result of observations and the accumulation of facts.

If we proceed to an examination of the products of the soil in the two sections, we find the following facts :

First, as respects metals and minerals, and the capital invested in their produce and manufacture :

	CAPITAL INVESTED IN						
	Iron works.	Lead.	Gold.	Other metals.	Salt.	Coal.	Granite, marble, &c.
Northern States.	\$15,748,334	\$1,039,100	\$100	\$224,830	\$6,470,860	\$4,816,669	\$2,374,342
Southern States.	4,683,797	307,656	234,225	14,150	527,185	1,407,795	165,817
	20,432,131	1,346,756	234,325	238,980	6,998,045	6,224,464	2,540,159

Secondly, as respects agricultural products, we have the following facts on the authority of the census of 1840, and Mr. Tucker's "Progress of the United States."

In the northern states, there was, in 1840, of horses, mules and neat-cattle, sheep, swine and poultry, an estimated value of \$226,574,163.

In the southern states, there was, in 1840, in the same description of property, an estimated value of \$205,205,442.

There was raised from the soil, in the year 1840, the following estimated value of the various products enumerated :

	Cereal grains and potatoes.	Wool.	Rice.	Cotton.	Tobacco.	Sugar.	Other products.
	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.
Northern States.	144,711,700	9,030,865	-	-	388,122	684,847	130,764,037
Southern States.	138,988,992	2,261,279	1,955,840	57,130,302	10,012,402	4,814,427	36,298,704
	283,700,692	11,292,144	1,955,840	57,130,302	10,400,524	5,499,274	167,062,741

Thus, the total agricultural produce of the northern states is \$285,579,571; to which add the value of the poultry, and one-fourth of the gross value of the live stock (as representing its annually increased value), and the total amount is \$345,474,495; equal to about \$522 for each square mile of territory, or \$35 per head for the whole population.

The total produce of the southern states is \$251,461,946. To this add the value of the poultry, and one-fourth the value of the live stock, and the amount will be \$306,517,863; or about \$488 for each square mile of territory, and \$42.25 per head for the entire population. If the unsold portions of the public lands (February 7, 1839) situated in each section be deducted, the produce will be \$664 per square mile in the northern and \$786 per square mile in the southern states.

The cereal grains raised in the northern states amount to 288,513,263 bushels, or about $29\frac{2}{5}$ bushels for each inhabitant. Those raised in the southern states amount to 327,012,639 bushels, or about 45 bushels for each inhabitant. Of this amount, 250,344,443 bushels is Indian corn.

The potatoes raised in the northern states are 86,526,099 bushels, or $8\frac{4}{5}$ for each person. Those raised in the south are 19,007,256 bushels, or $2\frac{3}{5}$ for each person.

Professor Tucker calculates that the quantity of grain and potatoes annually consumed in the United States by a family of five persons, either directly or in the shape of animal food produced by their consumption, is as follows:

Indian corn,	. 85 bushels,	or for each person	17 bushels.
Oats,	. 28 “	“	$5\frac{3}{5}$ “
Wheat, rye, &c.,	25 “	“	5 “
Potatoes,	. 25 “	“	5 “

He allows one-tenth of the entire crop for seed.

The consumption of Indian corn in the northern states would

be, according to this calculation, in the year 1840, 166,719,119 bushels. The produce was 127,187,432, or, deducting one-tenth for seed, 114,468,689 bushels for consumption; there would be, therefore, a deficiency of 52,250,430 bushels.

The consumption of the southern states would be 123,357,882 bushels. Their produce is 250,344,443 bushels. Deducting one-tenth for seed, there is 225,310,000 left for consumption; and there is, therefore, a surplus of 101,952,118 bushels.

The consumption of oats in the northern states will be 53,919,-239 bushels. The produce is 80,967,827 bushels. Deduct one-tenth for seed, and there will be 72,871,045 bushels for consumption, or a surplus of 18,951,806 bushels.

In the southern states there will be 40,635,537 bushels of oats consumed. The quantity raised for consumption, after allowing one-tenth for seed, is 37,893,163 bushels. There is, therefore, a deficiency of 2,742,374 bushels.

The northern states will consume of wheat, rye, &c., an amount of 49,035,035 bushels; and as in 1840 they raised 80,358,004 bushels of these grains, there would be, after deducting for seed, a surplus of 23,287,969 bushels.

The southern states consumed of the same grains 36,281,730 bushels. They raised 34,564,082; leaving, after deducting for seed, 31,107,674 bushels for consumption, and showing a deficiency of 5,174,056 bushels.

The account for cereal grains will therefore stand thus :

	Indian corn.		Oats.		Wheat, rye, &c.	
	Surplus.	Deficiency.	Surplus.	Deficiency.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
N. states.						
S. states.	101,952,118	52,250,430	18,951,806	2,742,374	23,287,969	5,174,056
	49,701,688 surplus.		16,209,432 surplus.		18,113,913 surplus.	

RECAPITULATION.

Northern states — total deficient,	10,010,655
Southern states — total surplus,	94,035,688
Surplus,	<u>84,025,033</u>

In 1840 the northern states raised 86,526,099 bushels of potatoes. Deduct one-tenth for seed, and there was 77,873,490 left for consumption. The consumption, at five bushels each, was 49,035,035 bushels; leaving a surplus of 28,838,455 bushels.

The southern states consumed 36,281,730 bushels, and raised 19,007,256 bushels; from which deduct the seed, and 17,106,531 bushels were left for consumption. There was, consequently, a deficiency of 19,175,199 bushels.

With respect to *manufactures* of every description, the estimated amount produced (1840) was, after deducting the cost of materials, in the northern states, \$199,196,919, or \$20 $\frac{1}{3}$ for each person, or \$20 $\frac{7}{10}$ for each white person.

The amount produced in the southern states was, on a similar calculation, \$39,873,496, or \$5 $\frac{1}{2}$ for each person, or \$8 $\frac{7}{10}$ for each white person.

In estimating the profits of the *commerce* of the two sections Mr. Tucker's ratio of calculation (estimating them at 25 per cent. on the capital employed) has been adopted. By this rule, the profits arising to the northern states by commerce (1840) were \$62,266,209, or \$6.47 for each white person, and \$6.35 per head for the whole population.

Those of the southern states were \$35,454,877, or \$7.75 for each white person, and \$4.88 each for the entire population.

On referring to the products of the *forest*, we find that the northern states furnished (1840) \$12,885,900, or about \$1.31 for each individual, or \$1.34 for each white person. The southern states supplied \$4,529,996, or \$1 for each white person, or 62 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents per head on the whole population.

As respects the *fisheries*, the northern states produced \$11,120,792 of the products of the ocean, or \$1.13 for each individual, or \$1.16 for each white person. The slaveholding or southern states produced \$875,216; being $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents for each individual, or $19\frac{1}{10}$ cents for each white person.

The northern states produced (1840) \$33,281,927 from the *mines*, or \$3.40 for each individual, or \$3.46 for each white one. The southern states produced \$8,495,998; being \$1.17 for each individual, or \$1.86 for each white one.

We will now inquire what are the proportions in which the two sections of the country contribute to its *foreign trade*. If we make our calculations upon the data which we have endeavored to establish, we shall find that the articles of domestic produce exported during the year which ended 30th September, 1842, were furnished as follows:

First, of the *products of the fisheries*, there was exported during that year an amount of \$2,823,010. Calculating according to the proportions we have obtained, we shall find that the northern states furnished \$2,617,046 of this amount, and the southern states \$205,964.

Of the *products of the forests*, there were 5,518,262 exported. Our data assign \$4,082,917 of this amount to the northern states, and \$1,435,345 to the southern ones.

Of the *products of the mines*, there were \$779,967 exported; of which \$621,352 was furnished by the northern states, and \$158,615 by the southern.

There was exported during the same year, of *American manufactures*, the amount of \$7,630,727. Of this, \$6,386,555 is the proportion of the northern, and \$1,244,172 of the southern states.

The *rice, cotton and tobacco*, exported, were, of course, the product of the southern states.

Of the *products of animals*, there was an amount of \$4,568,-

772 exported. Of this, \$2,397,439 would be the produce of the northern states, and \$2,171,333 that of the southern states.

Of *agricultural produce*, other than *rice, cotton, tobacco and potatoes*, there was an amount of \$9,991,891 exported. Of this amount, it is evident from what has been already stated, only the *Indian corn and meal* (amount \$962,967) was the produce of the southern states. The remainder (\$9,028,924) was furnished by the northern states.

The *potatoes* exported were, of course, of northern origin; because the southern states do not raise enough for home consumption.

There was an amount of \$1,359,163 exported in articles not enumerated. The fairest mode of apportioning this appeared to be according to the relative population of the two sections. The account of articles for exportation, produced by the two sections, will then stand as follows :

DOMESTIC EXPORTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1842.

	Produce of the northern states.	Produce of the southern states.
Products of the fisheries,	\$2,617,046	\$205,964
Products of the forests,	4,082,917	1,435,345
Products of the mines,	621,352	158,615
Products of the manufactures,	6,386,555	1,244,172
Rice,		1,907,387
Cotton,		47,593,464
Tobacco,		9,540,755
Products of animals,	2,397,439	2,171,333
Indian corn and corn meal,		962,967
Potatoes,	85,844	
All other products of agriculture,	9,028,924	
Articles not enumerated, proportioned according to population,	920,723	438,440
Produced by the north,	26,140,800	65,658,442
Produced by the south,	65,658,442	
Gold and silver coin,	1,170,754	
Amount of domestic exports	\$92,969,996	

This statement assigns \$2.72 to each white person, and \$2.66

to each person, in the northern states; and \$14.35 to each white person, and \$9.04 to each of the population, of the southern states.

The *commerce and navigation* of the two sections of country were, for the year ending September 30, 1842, as follows :

	Imports.	Exports.		Total exports.
		Domestic.	Foreign.	
Northern states, . . .	\$84,882,044	\$34,512,539	\$10,448,330	\$44,960,869
Southern states, . . .	15,280,043	58,457,457	1,273,208	59,730,665
Total,	100,162,087	92,969,996	11,721,538	104,691,534

	Tonnage.		Vessels built.	Tonnage.
	Entered.	Cleared.		
Northern states, . . .	1,668,662	1,515,356	781	110,261 39-95
Southern states, . . .	574,224	761,592	240	18,822 25-95
Total,	2,242,886	2,276,948	1,021	129,083 64-95

Thus, the *imports* of the northern states were \$8.65 for each individual, and \$8.82 for each white person; and those of the southern states, \$2.10 for each person, and \$3.34 for each white inhabitant.

The *total exports* of the northern states were \$4.58 for each individual, and \$4.68 for each white person; those of the south, \$8.23 and \$13.05, respectively.

The *tonnage entered and cleared* in the two sections is in the proportion of 32 and 33 in the northern, and 18 and 29 in the southern states, when compared with the total and the white population, respectively.

The *tonnage of vessels built* is $4\frac{1}{3}$ to 1 in favor of the north on the entire population, and as $2\frac{4}{5}$ to 1 on the white portion of it.

With respect to the *banking institutions* of the two sections, the following table gives as many particulars as are attainable from sources which can be depended upon, January 1, 1840 :

	Banks making returns.				Banks not making returns.			
	Banks.	Branches.	Capital.	Circulation.	Banks.	Branches.	Capital.	Circulation estimated.
Northern states,	559	36	\$188,295,558	\$57,583,120	38	7	\$11,103,541	\$3,063,111
Southern states,	102	103	134,896,581	39,661,037	23	33	24,146,712	6,661,304
	661	139	323,192,439	97,244,157	61	40	35,250,253	9,724,415

RECAPITULATION.

	Total banks.			
	Banks.	Branches.	Capital.	Circulation estimated.
Northern states,	597	43	\$199,399,099	\$60,646,231
Southern states,	125	136	159,043,593	46,322,341
	722	179	358,442,692	106,968,572

This table gives a banking capital of \$20.84 to each white inhabitant, and \$6.30 of bank circulation in the northern states. The southern states had \$34.77 of bank capital, and \$10.12 of bank circulation, for each white inhabitant.

Of the banks which were transacting business on the 1st January, 1839, 227 in the northern states suspended specie payments during the year 1839, and had not resumed in January, 1840. In the southern states, 186 banks were in that position.

So much with respect to all the great objects towards which human industry, skill and enterprise, are generally directed. How far their relative proportions and results have originated in, or have depended upon, the particular institutions of the two sections, it is not the business (admitting we had the power, which we do not profess to have) of the committee to determine.

With respect to the moral conduct and standing of the inhabitants of the two sections, it may be observed that we know almost

as little of the *moral* atmosphere as we do of the *material* one. Good and evil are distributed in very nearly proportional quantities throughout both sections. Each has its peculiar mental and moral diseases, as well as its corporeal ones; and the former, like the latter, may perhaps be best cured by a change of atmosphere and circumstance. One thing appears certain, and that is, the more the citizens of the two sections mix together in all the intercourses of social life and the business of the world, the more they will esteem and respect each other, and the more rapidly will be banished from among us those anti-American words, "separation" and "disunion."

Intemperance is, no doubt, one of the greatest curses which can afflict a people, leading, as it does, to the neglect of every domestic, social and public duty, and the commission of every crime. It would be as unfair to deduce the amount of intemperance in a district of country from the quantity of intoxicating liquors which is distilled or brewed in it, as it would be to proportion the degrees of pugnacity and combativeness among mankind from the quantity of *fire-arms* each country manufactures, or the *gunpowder* which it fabricates. It would probably be quite as well for the morals and the well-being of mankind, if the quantity manufactured of all these things were diminished. The following table is given, as furnishing additional items (1840) of "sectional statistics:"

	Distilleries.		Breweries.		Gunpowder.	Fire-arms.	
	No.	Gallons distilled.	No.	Gallons brewed.	Lbs. manufactured.	Cannons.	Small Arms.
Northern States, . .	2464	35,060,201	294	21,630,343	8,004,440	190	72,928
Southern States, . .	7842	6,342,426	112	1,637,387	972,908	84	15,145
	10,306	41,402,627	406	23,267,730	8,977,348	274	88,073

It may be asked, What proportion do these two sections contribute, respectively, to the general government, in the form of revenue

from customs, post-office, &c. ? What number of civil, military and naval officers, does each furnish ? What is the share which each holds in the legislature of the federal government ? What is the amount which they annually draw from the treasury, in the shape of salaries, &c., to their respective citizens ?

We will endeavor to answer these questions, premising that our only object is to state facts ; not that such facts may serve as the basis of recrimination and jealousy, but that the citizens of both sections may perceive the truth, and, perceiving it, become convinced that *union, and union only, is strength.*

In the northern states, the white population of 9,615,629 persons paid to the revenue, in 1840, \$20,560,465, under the head of *customs*, which was \$2.13 each, or \$2.09 per head on the whole population. In the southern states, the white population of 4,574,076 paid \$3,603,259 to the *customs*, or 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents each, or about 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents for each person included in the entire population.

The northern states paid to the post-office, during the year which ended June 30, 1843, the amount of \$557,562, or 5 $\frac{2}{3}$ cents for each inhabitant, or 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ cents for each white one. In the southern states, the post-office, mail routes, &c., cost the government, during the same period, over and above the receipts of postage, \$547,353, being an expense of 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents incurred for each person, or 12 cents for each white one.

Taking these two sources of revenue together, the northern states contributed \$2.14 $\frac{2}{3}$ for each inhabitant, or \$2.18 $\frac{7}{8}$ for each white one ; the southern states contributed 42 cents for each person, or 66 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents for each white one.

The entire number of native-born citizens employed as officers in the army, navy, and civil departments, was, on the 1st January, 1844, according to the Blue Book and the Army and Navy Registers, 4739, who received an annual compensation of \$5,156,920. Of these, 2910 were citizens of the northern states, and received a

compensation of \$3,047,863,—being one in every 3304 of the white population, and equivalent to $31\frac{2}{3}$ cents for each one of that population. The southern states furnished the remaining 1829 public officers, whose annual salaries, &c., amounted to \$2,109,057,—being one in every 2500 white citizens, and equal to a division of $46\frac{1}{3}$ cents to each one of them.

For the great offices of *president, vice-president, and cabinet ministers*, the northern states have furnished 67 incumbents, the southern states 56.

If the organization of the *Senate of the United States* be examined, it will be found that the northern or free states send 28 members to that body, and the southern or slave states 24. The former each represent 157,438 persons above 20 years of age who can read and write, and the latter 67,310.

The *House of Representatives* consists of 223 members, of whom 136 are from the northern states, and each represents 32,413 white persons above 20 years of age who can read and write; or, dividing the entire white population among them, they represent 70,703 persons each. The southern states are represented by 87 members, having each for his constituents 18,574 white persons above 20 years of age who can read and write, or 52,575 white persons of all descriptions.

There do not appear to be any other important relations in which these two sections of the Union can be considered as affecting each other, or, by individual action, affecting the whole. The line of division adopted in these observations has been strictly SLAVERY OR NO SLAVERY; for it was entirely with reference to this question, and with a desire to furnish the statistics of the sections so formed, that they were commenced.

It may be said that the State of Delaware has been included among the northern or non-slaveholding states, whereas she is generally regarded as a slaveholding one. The reason why she has

been herein associated with the northern states is, that, although it is not recollected that her legislature has adopted any positive enactments against slavery, that feature is rapidly, though silently, disappearing from her soil; and that, for all the purposes of these observations, she is most correctly classed as a northern state. Those who may consider Delaware as erroneously placed have very ready means for correcting such error.

And, now, what are the conclusions to which facts and figures have conducted us? They are as follows; and, first, as to *population*:

First. That the northern or free states have a white numerical force more than double that of the southern or slaveholding states.

Second. That this ratio is continually increasing.

Third. That the free colored people of the northern states are to those of the southern states as 1 to 1.058.

Fourth. That the entire colored population of the northern states is to that of the southern states as 1 to 14.

Next, as to the *means of education*:

First. As to universities and colleges, those in the northern states are to those in the southern states, when compared with their respective white population, as 1 to 2; the students, as 1 to 1.62; and the contents of the libraries, as 1 to $1\frac{1}{5}$; — all in favor of the south.

Second. In the medical, theological, and law schools, the advantage is also on the side of the south, excepting so far as regards the number of theological schools, and the extent of their libraries.

Third. The whites above 20 years of age who cannot read and write, in the northern states, are to those of the same class in the southern states, when compared with their respective populations, as 1 to $3\frac{2}{5}$.

Fourth. The academies, grammar and primary schools, in the

northern states, are to those of the south (in respect to their white population) as more than 2 to 1.

Fifth. In the northern states, nearly 90 per cent. of the white children under 15 years of age attend some public school; in the southern states, there is not 25 per cent. of the children of the same age in attendance at public schools. About 50 per cent. more of these children, however, learn to read and write before they are 20 years of age; so that not more than 20 to 25 per cent. are without the rudiments of knowledge.

Newspapers and Periodicals. — Those published in the northern states are to those published in the southern states (in respect to their white population) as $1\frac{1}{5}$ to 1.

The *patents* taken out by citizens of the northern states, compared with those taken out by citizens of the south, are, to their respective white populations, as more than 2 to 1, in point of number, in favor of the former.

The progress of *internal improvement*, as indicated by *railroads and canals*, is very nearly in proportion to the white population of the two sections.

The relative habits of *industry and production* of the inhabitants of the two sections may be estimated from the statement that the *unproductive* class in the northern states is to that in the southern states at $7\frac{7}{10}$ to $9\frac{1}{4}$, or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. *less* in the former than the latter.

As to *health and longevity*, the table given in page — shows that the southern states have a larger proportion of their population under 15 years of age than the north; that, from 15 to 90, the north has a greater proportion; that, from 90 to 100, the south again has the ascendancy; and that the proportion of white persons over 100 years of age in the south is more than double that in the north.

Calculations also tend to show that the *average* age of the white

population of the northern states, at the date of the census of 1840, was to that of the southern states as 22.567 years to 20.711 years, or 1.856 years in favor of the former; and that the average of the southern states was 1.259 below the average of the entire country, that of the northern states being 0.597 above it.

Next, as to *productions*; and first as to *mines and minerals*:

The northern states employ a capital in the produce and the manufacture of *metals, minerals, &c.*, which, compared with that used by the south in the same pursuits (regard being had to their respective white populations), is as 2 to 1 in favor of the former.

As regards the value of *agricultural property and products*, we find, first, as respects *live stock*, including *poultry*, that the northern states held, in 1840, an amount which, compared with that possessed by the south, and in reference to the white population of each, was as $1\frac{9}{10}$ to 1 in favor of the south.

As regards *agricultural produce*, the crop of *cereal grains and potatoes* in the northern states bears the proportion of 1 to $1\frac{1}{3}$, when compared with that of the south, in reference to the *entire* population of each; or of 1 to 2, when their respective *white* populations are considered.

The produce of *wool* is as $2\frac{9}{10}$ to 1 in favor of the northern states, when calculated on the entire population, or of 2 to 1 on the white population.

Rice, cotton and tobacco, may all be regarded as products of the southern states. *Sugar* is also so comparatively a southern product as to be also justly assignable to that section.

All other kinds of agricultural produce are furnished by the northern states in a ratio of $2\frac{2}{3}$ to 1, when compared with the entire population; or of $1\frac{7}{10}$ to 1, when compared with the white populations of the two sections.

The total annual value of the *agricultural produce* of the northern states, when compared with the southern states, is as 35

to 42 in regard to the whole population, or as 35 to 65 in respect to the white portion of it.

We have seen that, upon the *consumption of cereal grains* allowed by Mr. Tucker, the northern states raise upwards of 52,000,000 of bushels of *Indian corn* less than they consume, and the southern states a surplus of more than 100,000,000 of bushels; that the northern states raise a surplus of nearly 19,000,000 of bushels of *oats*, and the southern states have a deficiency of about 2,750,000 of bushels; that the northern states have a surplus of 23,250,000 of bushels of *wheat, rye, and other bread-stuffs*, and the southern states a deficiency of upwards of 5,000,000; and that the entire crop of *cereal grains*, after furnishing for seed and consumption, yields a surplus of 84,000,000 of bushels for distillation, manufactures, food for horses, exportation, &c.

In the article of *potatoes*, the northern states raise a surplus of 29,000,000 of bushels, and the southern states are deficient 19,000,000 of bushels.

The proportion of *manufactures* produced by the two sections, according to their respective populations, is as $3\frac{7}{10}$ in the northern states to 1 in the southern, on the entire population; or as $2\frac{4}{10}$ to 1, on the white population.

In the proportion of *profit by commerce*, there is not much variation between the two sections.

In the *produce of the forest*, the northern states are to the southern ones as $2\frac{1}{10}$ to 1 on the whole population, or as $1\frac{1}{3}$ to 1 on the white portion.

In the *fisheries*, the northern states are to the southern ones as 9 to 1 on the entire population, and as 6 to 1 on the white portion of it.

With respect to the produce of *mines, quarries, &c.*, the two sections stand as $2\frac{9}{10}$ in the north to 1 in the south on the whole population, and as 1.86 to 1 on the white population.

As regards *foreign trade*, the amount of articles raised for *exportation* by the south is, in proportion to that raised by the north, as $3\frac{1}{3}$ to 1 on the entire population, and as 5.27 to 1 on the white portion of it.

The *imports* of the northern states are, to those of the south, as 4.11 to 1 on the entire population, or as 2.64 to 1 on the white.

The *entire exports* (foreign and domestic) as 1 to 1.80, and as 1 to 2.79, respectively, in favor of the southern states.

The *banking capital* in the northern states is, to that of the south, in reference to the respective white populations, as 1 to 1.67; the *bank circulation*, as 1 to 1.60.

With respect to the *revenue* paid to the general government from *customs*, the northern states stand to the southern ones as $4\frac{1}{5}$ to 1 on the entire population, and as $2\frac{7}{10}$ to 1 on the white portion of it.

The relations of the two sections to the *post-office revenue* have already been shown. Combining the *post-office* and the *customs* together, the northern states are to the southern as 5 to 1 on the whole population, and as $3\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 on the white.

The citizens of the northern states *holding civil, military or naval employment*, under the general government, are, to those of the southern states in similar positions, as 1 to $1\frac{1}{3}$ on the white populations of those sections; and the emoluments received are as 1 to 1.45 in favor of the latter.

The southern states have a *representation in the House of Representatives* based upon agreement and compromise; and no one who wishes to preserve good faith, and peace, and harmony, between the two sections of the Union, has any desire to disturb this arrangement. Whatever may be our individual opinions respecting it, or the principles involved by its operation, it is easy to perceive that it must, through the silent working of great principles,

gradually become less operative; and that it has not, at present, nearly the influence in the organization of the House of Representatives which it had twenty years ago. At this time, the proportion of white persons in the southern states, who return a member to the house, is, to the number of white persons in the northern states who possess that privilege, as 1 to $1\frac{1}{3}$, or as 52,000 persons to 70,000. Very nearly the same proportion has existed since 1790.

But the *relative number of members* sent by the southern states has diminished, and is diminishing. To maintain the position which they held in 1790, they ought to return 101 out of the 223 members of which the House of Representatives is composed at the present time; but they return only 87.

The following table will show the gradual operation of this diminution; and though the effect may be considered a slow one, it has already produced important results, and has changed, to a considerable degree, the numerical strength of the respective sections under consideration:

	Number of representatives.	Representatives from free states.	Representatives from slave states.	Whites in a free state returning a member.	Whites in a slave state returning a member.	Proportion of whites in free and slave states returning a member.	Number of members which the slave states should have returned, to preserve the position they held in 1790,— and loss.
1790	106	58	48	35,575	25,525	1.31 to 1	
1800	142	78	64	33,991	25,830	1.31 to 1	64 — no loss.
1810	183	106	77	34,986	27,966	1.25 to 1	83 — loss of 6 members.
1820	213	124	89	41,013	31,315	1.31 to 1	96 — loss of 7 “
1830	242	143	99	48,433	36,395	1.33 to 1	109 — loss of 10 “
1840	223	136	87	70,703	52,575	1.32 to 1	101 — loss of 14 “

The general deductions which appear to flow from this brief survey and summary are few, but highly important. They are —

First. That there is nothing in the interests, the conditions, or the circumstances, of either of the portions into which we have

divided the country, which is adverse to the most entire and perfect union and identity with the other.

Secondly. That the peculiar products, capabilities and resources, of each section, render it necessary to the other, and capable of promoting its happiness and prosperity.

Thirdly. That the union of the two presents a combination of power to produce all the elements and materials of wealth and prosperity, through their great channels, agriculture, commerce and manufactures, which has rarely, if ever, been possessed by any nation.

We will not even glance at the disloyal and traitorous questions, "How far can the north prosper without the south, or the south support itself without the north?" or, "What has the south to expect from the friendship of the north, or the north to dread from the anger of the south?" These are questions which will not be seriously asked, by any lover of his country, or her institutions. They are questions which no friend to her best interests will raise into importance, by giving a serious reply to. At the same time, it is the part of wisdom to ascertain the truth, and to state facts. This the committee have endeavored to do.

There do not appear to be, in the survey which has been taken, any circumstances in the *present* position of the two sections which can justify any morbid sensibility upon the subject of slavery,—which should make any allusion to it operate as a firebrand even in the councils of the nation, and cause the words "*separation*," "*disunion*," &c., to be bandied about, with menacing looks and angry tones, as phrases of common and trifling import.

Is there anything threatening in the *future*, with respect to this class of society? Anything denoting its dangerous increase? Anything more subversive of the rights of humanity, more derogatory to the principles of our institutions, or more adverse in its mode of existence to the general interests of the nation, than there

has formerly been? It is sincerely believed that all these questions may be answered in the negative.

It was stated in the commencement of these observations, that if this troublesome and exciting question of slavery were left to settle itself by the operation of causes and principles which Providence kindly permits to be ceaselessly working in society for the education of good, and the prevention of evil, it would, in a comparatively short time, resolve itself by a very peaceable and a very satisfactory solution.

Slavery exists among us; it has existed ever since we were a nation; it was fixed upon us before we became one. With our national independence commenced our endeavors to free ourselves from its effects, or, at least, to prevent its increase. A numerous society devoted to the suppression of the slave trade, and composed of men of all religious denominations, was organized here, *twelve* years before any association for the same purpose existed in England. Virginia abolished the traffic in 1778; Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, prohibited it to their citizens, under the severest penalties, in 1780, 1787, and 1788. Great Britain renounced the slave-trade on the 25th March, 1807, forbidding the landing of slaves in any part of her colonies after the 1st of March, 1808. "Federal America interdicted the trade from her ports thirteen years before,—namely, on the 22d March, 1794. She made it punishable as a crime seven years before (10th May, 1800). She fixed four years sooner the period for non-importation, which period was the 1st of January, 1808. Great Britain determined the period for her colonies 1st of March, 1808."*

Our entire course of legislation has been marked with humanity and justice; for, whilst we endeavored to improve the condition of the *black* man, we did not forget that there were also *white* men, whose interests required protection, whose safety must not be

* Walsh's Appeal, page 320, &c.

endangered, whose comforts and happiness should also be regarded. In many of our states, slavery has ceased to exist as an authorized condition; in others, it is gradually diminishing; in *all*, the desire is exhibited to mitigate its severities to the utmost, to diminish the number of its victims as far as prudent and possible, and to get rid of it as soon as the *combined interest of all parties, and the real well-being of the state*, shall admit of such an event.

Let us look a little at the sober rhetoric and the convincing logic of figures; and what do they tell us? First, that in the years 1790, 1800, and 1840, our population, and the different varieties of it, stood as follows :

	Population.	Whites.	Free colored.	Slaves.	Proportion of whites.	Proportion of free colored.	Proportion of slaves.
1790	3,929,827	3,172,464	59,466	697,897	80.72 per ct.	1.52 per ct.	17.76 per ct.
1800	5,305,925	4,304,489	108,395	893,041	81.13 “	2.04 “	16.83 “
1840	17,063,353	14,189,705	386,293	2,487,355	83.16 “	2.26 “	14.58 “

The slave population, therefore, so far from having unduly increased, has diminished, in its relative proportion to the whites, from 17.76 per cent. to 14.58 per cent.

Mr. Tucker shows, at page 55 of his work on the “Progress of the United States,” that the whites in the slave-holding states have gained on both classes of the colored population. There is no occasion, therefore, for any excitement on this head.

Again; will it be asserted that the condition of the slave is worse now than it was when the basis of our constitution was fixed? We do not think that any one, who would be regarded as a competent and unprejudiced witness, will make this assertion. No doubt, the progressive melioration of the condition of the slave has sometimes been arrested by injudicious interference. He may justly exclaim, “Save me from my friends!” for through their means his condition has, in some instances, become absolutely

worse. But, taking the subject in all its bearings, the position of the slave is an improved and an improving one. Nor is there anything in the present mode or degree of the condition of slavery in our country more derogatory to our institutions, or more adverse to the general interests of the nation, than they have been ever since the date of our political existence; on the contrary, they are tending most decidedly to an opposite issue. No one defends slavery in the abstract. The question is not “shall it now be established?” but “What is the most judicious mode of treating it now it is established, and has become part and parcel of our social and political system?”

Let us again appeal to facts and figures, and inquire what has been the withdrawal of slavery towards the south? This question will be answered by the following table:

	Slaves north of North Carolina.	Slaves in Kentucky and Tennessee.	Slaves in other states.	Total.
In 1800	496,639, or 55 3-5 pr. c.	53,927, or 6 pr. c.	342,475, or 38 2-5 pr. c.	893,041
1810	540,673, or 45 4-10 “	125,096, or 10 5-10 “	525,595, or 44 1-10 “	1,191,364
1820	561,438, or 36 2-5 “	206,839, or 13 2-5 “	775,411, or 50 1-5 “	1,543,688
1830	584,941, or 29 1-10 “	306,816, or 15 3-10 “	1,117,295, or 55 6-10 “	2,009,052
1840	546,788, or 22 “	365,317, or 14 7-10 “	1,575,250, or 63 3-10 “	2,487,355

This statement shows that, whilst in all the states on the seaboard north of North Carolina the proportion of slave population has been rapidly diminishing, and in Kentucky and Tennessee but slowly increasing, it has very rapidly increased in the other states. These remaining slave states contain a surface of 440,980 square miles.

In 1800 their slave pop. was only $\frac{77}{100}$ of a slave to a square mile.

1810 it was . . . $1\frac{1}{5}$ slaves “ “

1820 it was . . . $1\frac{3}{4}$ “ “ “

1830 it was . . . $2\frac{1}{2}$ “ “ “

1840 it was . . . $3\frac{2}{5}$ “ “ “

This tendency of the slave population to the south is produced

by the strongest principle which operates on human nature — self-interest; slave labor being more profitable in the states where it is rapidly concentrating than in those from whence it is removing.

Louisiana, Arkansas and Florida, form part of the section where this accumulation is taking place. They have been added to the territory of the Union since 1800. In 1840 they contained 214,104 slaves. Now, although these added portions of territory embrace 148,220 square miles of surface for a slave population to spread over, the proportional percentage of slaves in the whole Union, compared with that of the whites, has diminished, since 1800, in the ratio of 16.83 to 14.58. Thus, not only the *density*, but the *relative amount* of slavery, has diminished since the acquisition of slaveholding territory.

Missouri, although not a *southern* state, is, in other respects, in the same position as Arkansas, Louisiana and Florida,—her territory having been added to the United States since 1800,—and her surface and slave population ought to be included in the above statement; making the entire amount of additional space to be 211,220 square miles, and the number of slaves within the added territory 272,344. But yet the relative amount of slave population, when compared with the whites throughout the whole Union, has diminished, since the addition of this vast area, from 16.83 per cent. to 14.58 per cent.

Again, the number of slaves in the United States in 1790 was 697,897; in 1840, it was 2,487,355; proportion in the two periods, 1 to 3.56.

The white population increased, in the same period, from 3,172,464 to 14,189,705; proportion, 1 to 4.47.

But the whites increased in a greater proportion than the slaves, not only when the *whole Union* was considered, but a comparison between the census of 1830 and that of 1840 will show that this

was also the case in the *slave states taken alone*, during the ten intervening years.*

It follows, therefore, as effect follows cause, that the time will arrive when slavery must altogether cease, by being gradually swallowed up in the preponderating white population. How much this time may be hastened or deferred by other circumstances, is a matter of serious importance.

These views of the case, particularly the fact that the addition of Louisiana and Florida to the Union has not had a tendency to increase slavery, but that the result, so far, has been directly the reverse, appear to have a very close connection with the (at present) much debated subject, the annexation of Texas to the Union. The committee wish to allude to this question only so far as it is connected with the subject of slavery, and in relation to its bearing upon the statistics connected therewith. Viewing the annexation of Texas in this connection, the committee have come to the conclusion that, *all other objections being removed*, the question of slavery, and all matters connected with it, will not offer any valid objections to the union. On the contrary, *this union would operate favorably upon that question in all its bearings*; and your committee would regard such union as one of the means which Providence has ordained for gradually freeing our country from this dangerous ingredient in its social composition.

“Many causes may prolong or abridge the existence of slavery in the United States, but none of them seem capable of averting its ultimate destiny. We may say of it, as of man,—the doom of its death, though we know not the time or the mode, is certain and irrevocable.” †

Mr. Senator Walker's statements upon this subject (see his let-

* Tucker's “Progress of the United States.”

† Ibid.

ter to the people of Carroll county, Kentucky) are deserving of very serious attention.

“Since the purchase of Louisiana and Florida,” says Mr. Walker, “and the settlement of Alabama and Mississippi, there have been carried into this region, as the census demonstrates, from the States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky, half a million of slaves, including their descendants, that otherwise would now be within the limits of those four states.” “Now, if we double the rate of diminution, as we certainly will, by the reānnexation of Texas, slavery will disappear from Delaware in ten years, and from Maryland in twenty, and have greatly diminished in Virginia and Kentucky.” “In the District of Columbia it would disappear in twelve years.” “As slavery advances in Texas, it must recede, *to the same extent*, from the more northern of the slave-holding states; and, consequently, the evil to the northern states, from the expulsion into them of free blacks, by abolition, gradual or immediate, would thereby be greatly mitigated, if not entirely prevented.” “This reānnexation, then, would only change the *locality* of the slaves, and of the slave-holding states, *without augmenting their number*.” “As regards the slaves, the African being from a tropical climate, his comforts and condition would be greatly improved by a transfer from northern latitudes to the genial and most salubrious climate of Texas.” “By the reānnexation of Texas, as the number of free blacks augmented in the slave states, they would be diffused gradually through Texas into Mexico and Central and Southern America, where nine-tenths of the present population are already of the colored races, and where, from their vast preponderance in number, they are not a degraded caste, but upon a footing, not merely of legal, but, what is far more important, of actual equality with the rest of the population.” “The process (of diffusion) will be gradual and progressive, without a shock, without a convulsion; whereas, by the loss of Texas,

and the imprisonment of the slave population of the Union within its present limits, *slavery would increase* in nearly all the slave-holding states, *and a change in their condition would become impossible*; or, if it did take place by sudden or gradual abolition, the result would as certainly be the sudden or gradual introduction of hundreds of thousands of free blacks into the states of the north." "There is but one way in which the north can escape this evil, and that is, the reännexation of Texas, which is the only safety-valve for the whole Union, and the only practicable outlet for the African population, through Texas, into Mexico and Central and Southern America. There is a congenial climate for the African race." "There, the boundless and almost unpeopled territory of Mexico and Central and Southern America, with its delicious climate and most prolific soil, renders most easy the means of subsistence; and there they would not be a degraded caste, but equals among equals, not only by law, but by feeling and association."

"If slavery be confined within its present limits, I do not perceive when and how it is to terminate. It is true, Mr. Tucker has demonstrated that, within probably less than eighty years, from the density of population in all the slave-holding states, hired labor would be as abundant and cheap as slave labor, and that all *pecuniary* motive for the continuance of slavery would then have ceased. But would it, *therefore*, then disappear? No, it certainly would not; for, at the lowest ratio, the slaves would then number at least ten millions. Could such a mass be emancipated? No; ten millions of free blacks, permitted to roam at large in the limits of the south, could never be tolerated. Again, then, the question is asked, Is slavery never to disappear from the Union? This is a startling and momentous question; but the answer is easy, and the proof is clear. *It will certainly disappear, if Texas is reännexed to the Union*,—not by abolition, but slowly

and gradually by diffusion, as it has already thus nearly receded from several of the more northern of the slave-holding states, and as it will continue thus more rapidly to recede by the reānnexation of Texas; and, finally, in the distant future, without a shock, without abolition, without a convulsion, disappear into and through Texas, into Mexico and Central and Southern America." "Beyond the Del Norté slavery will not pass; not only because it is forbidden by law, but because the colored races there preponderate in the ratio of ten to one over the white; and holding, as they do, the government and most of the offices in their own possession, they will never permit the enslavement of any portion of the colored race, which makes and executes the laws of the country."

"Mexico, Central America and South America, contain together an area of 8,376,000 square miles, and a population of 24,000,000, of whom about 2,700,000 are white, and the rest Indians, Africans, mulattoes, and other colored races."

"The outlet for our negro race, through this vast region, can never be opened but by the reānnexation of Texas; but, in that event, there, in that extensive country (Mexico, Central and South America), bordering upon our negro population, and four times greater in area than the whole Union, with a sparse population of but three to the square mile, where nine-tenths of the population is of the colored races; — there, upon that fertile soil, and in that delicious climate, so admirably adapted to the negro race, as all experience has now clearly proved, the free black would find a home. There, also, as slaves, in the lapse of time, from the density of population and other causes, are emancipated, they will disappear, from time to time, west of the Del Norté; and, beyond the limits of the Union, among a race of their own color, will be diffused throughout this vast region, where they will not be a degraded caste, and where, as to climate, and social and moral condition,

and all the hopes and comforts of life, they can occupy, among equals, a position they can never attain in any part of this Union."

These long extracts have been introduced here, because the opinions expressed are in most complete corroboration of the calculations and the deductions already expressed in this report. They show the gradual withdrawal of slavery from the north towards the south, a fact proved by each succeeding census. They show that the locality of the slaves would be changed, and assert that the number of the slaves and the slave-holding states would not be augmented. This report has shown that the proportion of the colored population to the white has been reduced since the annexation of Louisiana and Florida. Why should a contrary effect be produced by the addition of Texas? The committee meddle not with the political considerations arising from any prospective increase or diminution in the number of slave states. But it is very probable that slave states would diminish quite as rapidly in the north as they would increase in the south.

Mr. Walker shows how the constantly augmenting number of free blacks in the southern states would be diffused, through Texas, into Mexico and South America, if Texas were incorporated into the Union. But, if Texas remain in her present position, this could not take place; for they could not enter her territory, and, of course, could not pass through it to the free nations south of that country. Mr. Tucker's calculations have demonstrated that, "in about eighty years, all pecuniary motive for the continuance of slavery in the United States will have ceased." Where must the millions of this valueless black population find a resting-place and a home? Will the north say, "Come here"? Will the south say, "Stay here"? Both questions may be promptly answered in the negative. But, if Texas speedily becomes part of the Union, then the diffusion of this black population will be slowly and gradually made from the north to the south, until it disap-

pears, through Texas, into Mexico and Central and South America. Thus do the deductions of the politician, and the arguments of the philosophical statesman, corroborate and fortify the calculations of the statist, and the unerring results of facts and figures.

The committee have now completed what they purposed when they commenced this addition to their former report. They have stated the leading circumstances of the population, the commerce, the agriculture, the manufactures, &c., of the northern and southern sections of the Union, making the existence or non-existence of slavery the division line. It has been shown, upon the highest statistical authority, that, whilst each section is rich in its own resources, and varies from the other in its products, its pursuits, and its institutions, yet their interests are one and indivisible; that neither has any right to entertain towards the other any jealousies, heart-burnings or mistrusts; that a little mutual bearing and forbearing with each other, and allowing each to think and act for itself in all matters which concern itself, will render their united progress easy and pleasant.

The committee have also endeavored to show, from statistical facts, that *slavery* is gradually working its way to a result favorable to the wishes and the interests of both sections of the country, by a process more efficacious, and abundantly more secure and satisfactory, than any plan which can be suggested by the most enlightened and prudent advocates of abolition. The committee have also ventured to suggest, in the words of a distinguished statesman, that a great measure, now before the public, if it be not objectionable on other accounts, may render most important aid to the object which both sections have in view.

REPORT RESPECTING NATIONAL TROPHIES.*

VICTORIES, in all ages of the world, have been commemorated by the exhibition of *trophies*. Among the ancients, a trophy consisted of a pile of arms taken from a vanquished enemy, raised by the conqueror in the most conspicuous part of the field of battle, and usually dedicated to some one of their gods. The spoils of the enemy were at first hung upon the trunk of a tree; but, instead of trees, succeeding ages erected monuments of brass and stone, and the destruction of one of these was regarded as *sacrilege*.

All European nations still sacredly preserve their trophies of victory; and in England, Prussia, Bohemia and Austria, they are yet displayed, not only in the royal palaces, but in temples consecrated to purposes of religious worship; and in France, the galleries of *Notre Dame*, and the chapel of the *Hotel des Invalides*, are richly embellished with the many standards and other trophies which that power has, at various times, gained by her victories.

In our own country, as early as the 23d of June, 1778, it was “*Resolved*, That the board of war be directed to collect the standards and colors taken by the army of the United States since the commencement of the [Revolutionary] war.”

This resolution of Congress was, however, lamentably neglected; for in January, 1814, when a committee of the House of Repre-

* 28th Congress, second session, *House of Representatives*, No. 80. January 28, 1845 — Report of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, to whom was referred joint resolution No. 55, making a disposition of foreign flags which have been taken in battle, and of such flags of the United States as have been used in memorable battles.

sentatives had this subject under consideration, they were informed by the then Secretary of War :

“ Of the standards and colors taken by the army of the United States, during the war of the Revolution, six remain in this office ; others, it is understood, were deposited in Philadelphia while Congress sat in that city. Whether they were, or were not, brought to this place with the public offices, cannot be ascertained.”

From the Navy Department, the same committee learned that that department “ possesses no knowledge of *any* flags which were taken anterior to the war of 1812 ; such as have been captured with the *public* armed ships of the enemy, subsequent to June 18, 1812, have been carefully preserved.”

The small number of Revolutionary trophies in possession of the executive departments should cause Congress to take immediate measures for the preservation of those which remain. The capture of the Earl of Cornwallis, alone, furnished twenty-four standards and colors. Perhaps as many more were taken with General Burgoyne. Where are they now ? Either mouldered into dust, or rotting in some obscure place, at this time *unknown* !

The committee believe that any custom which has the sanction of all nations must have its origin in some deep feeling of the human heart ; and they think that even a partial glance at the history of any people will show that the custom of displaying their trophies of victory has its origin and preservation in the wonderful influence which *symbols* are known to exercise over the fancy and heart of every beholder.

A standard taken is an *insignia* of the *power of an enemy*, as well as of the glory of the captor ; and it is thus seen why, in the great battles fought in Europe, where thousands have been slain, the capture of a single standard or color constitutes a prominent feature in the report of the action.

In the opinion, then, of your committee, the public exhibition of

trophies of war must, in time of peace, have a tendency to develop national feeling; and in war excite a spirit of emulation in heroic achievements, which will add other trophies to those which it should now be our pride to display.

The committee which considered this subject, January, 1814,* remark, concerning the place most proper for the exhibition :

“ This should be public, and easy of access, at the same time that it should be perfectly secure from villanous attempts. These flags should be placed so as to be seen by every citizen who may wish to observe them. It will be of advantage that they should be noticed by every foreigner who may visit the United States. Can any objection be made to the spacious national apartments which are devoted to legislative purposes? What ornaments can be more suitable? Go abroad, and you may see the walls of the British House of Lords decorated with representations of some of the celebrated battles which were fought by the troops of Great Britain. At home, we find the principle already established by one branch of the legislature of the United States; in the senate-chamber we observe engravings of some of the battles of our Revolution; and, had time allowed the execution of the original design of the architect, the precedent would have had existence in the chamber of the representatives of the United States. It was contemplated that the frieze over the capitals of the Corinthian columns which sustain the dome should present, *in relief*, a regular series of the battles which secured our independence. Such decorations might gratify the artist, and afford an opportunity to display his talents; but, in a national view, little or no effect would be produced. It must be conceded that much more will be communicated to the spectators by the display of the captured standards.”

* See American State Papers, Military Affairs, vol. i., page 490.

Your committee cordially unite in approving the patriotic project submitted for their consideration; and, as an evidence of their approbation, they beg leave to submit to the house the following joint resolution :

Joint resolution for the preservation of foreign flags and other warlike trophies which have been taken in battle, and of such flags of the United States as have been used in memorable battles, or on other important occasions, either by the army or navy of the United States, or by the military force in the service of any state in the Union.

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all the foreign flags, or other warlike trophies, in possession of the United States, which have been taken in battle, and such American flags now in possession of the government as have been used in memorable battles, or on other important occasions, either by the army or navy of the United States, or by troops in service of any of the states of the Union, together with such other flags and trophies of similar character as may come into possession of the government, shall be collected and arranged, under the direction of the President of the United States, with the view of having them all safely deposited in a suitable apartment, to be prepared and reserved for that purpose, in any new edifice which may hereafter be erected for the uses of the War and Navy Departments of the United States.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE.*

A bill for establishing the Smithsonian Institution for diffusing useful knowledge among men, by promoting attention to improvements in agriculture, the mechanic arts, common schools, &c. &c.

WHEREAS, James Smithson, of London, in the kingdom of Great Britain, bequeathed his property to the United States of America, and the bequest was duly accepted by Congress, for the purpose of founding at Washington, under the name of the "Smithsonian Institution," an establishment for the increase and diffusion of useful knowledge among men :

And whereas, the sum of five hundred and eight thousand three hundred and eighteen dollars was actually received by Congress under this legacy, in the year eighteen hundred and thirty-eight ; which sum, with the interest thereon accruing at six per cent., will form on the first of next July an aggregate of seven hundred and seventeen thousand four hundred and twenty-one dollars :

And whereas, it is desirable that the bequest, thus generously made, shall be sacredly secured for the purpose of extending, through long ages, the benefits to mankind contemplated by the individual whose name is perpetuated by the institution springing from his philanthropic munificence :

* In the House of Representatives, February 28, 1845, Mr. Pratt submitted the above bill, as a substitute for the bill from the Senate (No. 18), entitled "An act to establish the Smithsonian Institution for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men ;" which was referred to a committee of the whole house, and ordered to be printed.

And whereas, the promotion of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, by the distribution of premiums annually, and the encouragement of useful inventions and discoveries for rendering labor and enterprise more successful in the various branches of those three great departments of human industry, should be made prominent objects in an institution endowed by the philanthropic liberality of Smithson :

And whereas, knowledge is most effectually diffused by well-conducted common schools, and will be greatly increased among men by improving and perfecting the common-school systems of the several states, by elevating the standard of qualification for common-school teachers, and, generally, by spreading among the people a taste for science, literature, and the arts, in connection with the promotion of enlightened industry in the ordinary pursuits of business, and the advancement of human happiness : Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That out of the aggregate which will be formed, by principal and interest, on the first day of July next, the sum of six hundred and sixty-six thousand six hundred and sixty-six dollars be denominated the " Smithsonian fund," and be loaned permanently to the United States of America, at the rate of six per cent., so as to produce an annual revenue of forty thousand dollars forever, payable semi-annually, for the purpose of promoting improvement in the common-school systems of the United States ; for extending useful knowledge concerning agriculture, manufactures and commerce ; for stimulating researches in astronomy, geology and chemistry ; and for promoting useful discoveries in the various other branches of art and science, conducive to the prosperity and happiness of society generally.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That from the surplus

remaining after the investment before mentioned (which surplus will amount, on said first day of July, to fifty thousand seven hundred and fifty-four dollars), and from the interest thereafter accruing on the Smithsonian fund, a plain and substantial fire-proof granite edifice shall be erected in Washington before the fourth day of July, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-seven; which edifice shall not cost more than sixty thousand dollars, and be so arranged as to furnish convenient apartments for transacting the business of the institution, and preserving carefully its records.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That the establishment hereby created shall be distinguished as the "Smithsonian Institution;" and that, from and after the passage of this act, the business shall be conducted under the direction of a board of managers, consisting of the Vice-president of the United States and the secretaries of the several departments of the government, none of whom shall receive any payment for their services; and the said board of managers shall have authority to employ, at reasonable compensations, such agents and assistants as they may deem necessary in transacting the business; for the regulation of which business the said board is hereby vested with power to make any by-laws or rules which they may deem requisite for rendering the institution efficient in promoting the noble objects for which it is founded.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That out of the moneys controllable after the investment of the permanent fund aforesaid, and after discharging the cost of building and furnishing the edifice hereby ordered to be erected, the sum of thirty thousand dollars shall be appropriated annually for the encouragement of improvements in the common-school systems of the several states; for stimulating researches in the natural sciences, particularly astronomy, geology and chemistry; and for promoting useful inventions and discoveries for rendering labor more successful in

promoting the welfare of persons employed in the three great departments of human industry — agriculture, manufactures and commerce; — thus stimulating attention to intellectual and physical improvement, in a manner which would constitute a permanent and effectual mode of “increasing useful knowledge among men,” and furnish enduring mementos of the benevolent individual through whose liberality the institution is founded and endowed.

SPEECHES, LETTERS, &c.

LETTER TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.*

FELLOW-CITIZENS: Viewing the representative of the people in the character of an agent or trustee, bound to do their will, and considering the importance and responsibility of the trust confided to him, it necessarily becomes his duty, not only to make himself acquainted with their views and interests, but to make known to them, on all convenient occasions, his own purpose and motives.

With these views, and in reference to the coming election, I deem it my duty now to apprise my constituents that I cannot consent to become a candidate for reëlection. I make this announcement, because I have been solicited by some of my friends to be again a candidate (whether or not a majority of my constituents desire it, it is not important now to inquire), but it is proper that I should now make my purpose of retirement known, in order to promote harmony and insure union in respect to my successor.

The manner of my life and the nature of my employment have not furnished me with the requisites of an orator, and have deprived me of a mode (frequently resorted to) of communicating my views to my constituents by a speech upon the floor of Con-

* Letter addressed to his constituents, declining a reëlection, July 4, 1838.

gress. I, therefore, respectfully, but briefly, address you in this familiar form.

And, first, let me embrace probably the only opportunity I may have to return you my unfeigned thanks, — and language is too poor to express adequately my grateful sense of the obligation I am under to you for the honorable station to which your kindness and partiality have elevated me, rather than any qualification of my own. These obligations I can never forget, and they will always be a source of pleasing recollection to me, in after life. To my constituents generally I am indebted; and I hope it may not be considered out of place especially to thank my townsmen for the almost entire unanimity with which they supported me. It was known to most, if not all of my constituents, that I have ever been strong in the belief and warm in the profession of the republican doctrines of “*rotation in office*,” “*frequent elections*,” “*short reckonings*,” and “*strict accountability*.” It was, also, generally known that my extended manufacturing business and other interests, as well as domestic duties, would not permit my long continuance in public employment, at a distance from home. My plain but persevering business habits, coupled with my extended business relations, fit me to be more useful, in the local relations and intercourse with the inhabitants of our congressional district, than could be expected from me as a member of the national legislature. I would, at the same time, by no means undervalue or depreciate the services of business men in that exalted and responsible station; rather I would wish every member a business man, for experience has taught me that not a legislative question occurs, that is not connected with, and does not more or less affect the employments, the business concerns, or the property of the community.

In the mean time, I may be permitted to say, that I shall remain firmly at my post, and that whatever I possess of industry

and common sense and application will be employed, to the end of the term for which I have been elected, as they have been hitherto, for the promotion of the best interests of the people of my district, and of our common country.

You know, fellow-citizens, I am a man of few words; and it was my purpose to say nothing more in this communication, but to signify to you my purpose of retiring at the close of my present term; but I feel a desire to say a few words more.

It is remarkable that the inhabitants of our congressional district, so extensively commercial, so largely manufacturing, and so vigorously agricultural, as they are, should require so little national legislation, and so few executive favors or aids. So indicative is it of our local resources, industry and independence, that it has afforded your representative much gratification, and should be a source of just pride to yourselves. Indeed, there are few sections of the Union combining so many natural advantages, in point of soil, water-power, navigation, proximity to the great emporium of the nation, and with the prospect of a speedy addition by the completion of those great public roads, — the two railroads, connecting two of our large commercial towns on the banks of the Hudson with the fertile agricultural interior of the east and west.

I say, with these facilities, with our continued industry, avoiding those tendencies to excessive trading which have proved so disastrous to large portions of our country, we can hardly fail to be prosperous and happy.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. PRATT.

Washington, July 4, 1838.

LETTER TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.*

FELLOW-CITIZENS: Twice has your friendly partiality made me your representative in Congress. The close of my second term admonishes me that I ought, like every other agent, to render you "an account of my stewardship," that you may see if the trust which you committed to my care has been faithfully executed.

You all know that I am, and through life have been, a plain, hard-working mechanic, unaccustomed to handle the pen, and with no pretensions to elegance of expression, whether in speech or writing. You must pardon me, therefore, if, in rendering this account, I do it in my own rough way,—in a way which you and I can understand.

Many of you have, during the time I have served you, confided to my management or attention matters in which you were individually interested; and well know whether my services were, in such matters, promptly and faithfully rendered. All of you, also, either through public documents or the newspapers, have already had the means of knowing and judging whether I have duly attended to your local wants and interests. On those points, therefore, I need not detail either what I have done, nor the reasons for my acts.

In those matters of legislation relating to the country at large, in which I have borne a part, the PRACTICALLY USEFUL, however I may have come short of it, has been my constant aim. And, in estimating what was, or would be, practically useful, I have looked to *the future*, as well as the present. I have thought that in a country like ours, which may be said as yet hardly to have com-

* Address to his constituents, in 1845, declining reëlection.

menced its career, no legislation could be wise which did not look to the future, provide for its probable wants, take care of its apparent interests, and ward off its prospective dangers.

Politically a democrat, elected by democrats, and firmly believing that the principles and policy of the democratic party are in strict accordance with the nature of our institutions, and best calculated to secure our liberty and promote our prosperity, the journals will show that, in the four years of my service, that policy and those principles have never lacked my sanction or my support.

Believing, also, that I was bound to serve you *faithfully*, as well as usefully, I have endeavored, as far as was possible, to devote *my whole time* to the duties of a station which I owed to your kindness. I have considered myself as *the servant* of the people, and bound, in honor and in conscience, to labor as diligently as every "good and faithful servant" should. Hence, during the four years, and as many sessions, in which I have had the honor to be your representative, *I have never, even for a single day, been absent from my post and my duty.* I feel, therefore, whatever may have been my other faults, that indolence or negligence has not been among their number. Wrong I may have done,—mistaken I may have been,—but I have never *neglected to do.* In short, I have been governed by the same rules, in attending to your business, which have ever governed me in regard to my own. Many of you know full well the difficulties which I have encountered and overcome, in establishing among the hemlock forests of the Catskill Mountains one of the largest tanneries and thriftiest villages of which our state can boast. Many of you also know that I commenced this task only some twenty years since, and with little other capital or aid than were to be found in industry, perseverance, and a proper devotion to that useful, though homely maxim,

"Be always sure you 're right, — then go ahead."

Among the many important questions in which I have borne a part, that of Texan annexation may be particularly mentioned. Viewing this matter as important to the interests of all sections of our country, I freely gave my views in its favor, in a report upon the national census and statistics, during the session of 1844. Many of the public journals of the time rendered ample justice to my motives in this movement. The "Globe," in republishing a portion of my report, said, "Few documents compress in brief space a greater amount of valuable information bearing on the annexation question, as it concerns both north and south; and he may be considered a public benefactor who discusses the matter in a manner calculated to disseminate *facts*, without exciting or aggravating prejudices in either section of our common country."

I know you will pardon me for a quotation like this, showing the spirit in which my views were both expressed and received on this question,—a question which, in whatever light it may be viewed, must be admitted to be a *national question*, and one of no slight magnitude. As such, at least, even at that early day, it will be perceived that I considered it. It will also be perceived that I took my stand in favor of the measure at a period when very many of my democratic friends, whose opinions are entitled to the highest respect, were either averse from it or wavering. The recent and final vote upon the subject shows, however, that, so far, at least, as Congress is concerned, there is now a great harmony of views and feelings among the democratic party; and gives a gratifying assurance that, in due time, justice will be rendered at least to the *motives* of those who, like myself, went for annexation even before the question was presented for the action of Congress. The whigs, it is true, still denounce it. So did their federal predecessors denounce the acquisition of Louisiana. But time, the great touchstone both of measures and men, has abundantly vindicated the patriotic wisdom

and forecast of Jefferson and the democratic party in annexing that vast country to our confederacy. So may it be with Texas !

The Oregon question is one scarcely, if at all, less important than that of Texan annexation. Believing in our perfect right to that country, I have voted to give the British "notice to quit." I never liked that "joint occupation," as it is called, but which, in reality, has been a *British occupation*. I have no prejudices against the British government, but I do wish to keep our country free from the efforts which it is notoriously and systematically making to influence our domestic institutions and narrow our boundaries. Above all, I believe it right that we should both claim and protect what is clearly our own. I go, therefore, for prompt and energetic action in organizing, under our auspices, a territorial government in Oregon.

With a view of reaching Oregon, both for settlement and defence, the more readily, and with a view to commercial intercourse through it with China, and other rich and populous countries beyond the Pacific, I have also felt it a duty to urge upon Congress the propriety of immediate and energetic efforts for improving our overland communications with that territory. For this purpose, I have urged that surveys be authorized for the route of a railroad through our territory, from Lake Michigan to the mouth of the Columbia,—that thus we may realize and profit by that shorter route between Europe and China, which has been so anxiously sought for since the days of Columbus, and render tributary to us the commerce of the world. In an article on "Railroad Improvement," Hunt's Merchant's Magazine, a work distinguished for its just commercial views, in alluding to the memorial I presented, with accompanying remarks, to the house, observes: "The eyes of settlers, merchants and statesmen, are all intently fixed upon the great country of the Oregon, *through which the vast commerce of Asia is to be commanded by the United States.*"

I know there are those who sneer at such projects, and call the friends of them "visionaries." Just so, as many of you well remember, they did with our own "Erie Canal," and its friends. The canal, nevertheless, was made, and is the glory of our own and the envy of other states. Nor, "though neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet," do I hesitate to predict that, within the life-time of many of you, the whole route across our country between the Atlantic and Pacific will be traversed by railroad cars, in less time than it took, ten years since, for the mail to go from New York to New Orleans. Military defence, settlement, and the wants and interests of commerce, will all combine to produce this result; and in a matter of such vast magnitude, it is never too early to begin surveys and other preliminary arrangements, such as I proposed to Congress.

In addition to those about Texas and Oregon, other questions concerning the extension of our confederacy have claimed attention. Among the last of my votes in Congress were those for the admission of Florida and Iowa. It is a beautiful feature of our political system, that it can readily accommodate itself to the widest extension, local and municipal matters being left to the care of each particular state, while the national government is confined in its action strictly to national interests. Hence, each new state strengthens, instead of weakening, our national Union; because it adds one more to the number of those which have a common interest in maintaining it. I cannot agree with those who throw obstacles in the way of admitting new states. On the contrary, my voice and vote have been freely exerted in helping them to enter our great family of states, whenever they have presented themselves, duly prepared.

I have already said that my rules of action in public and private business were the same. I could not get along well in my tanning business, without knowing what was my stock in trade, where and

how my raw materials could be best and most economically procured, and what were the best markets for my manufactured article. Unless I know all these facts, I am liable to make blunders. Applying the same rule to public affairs, I thought no one could legislate wisely and prudently for a great and growing country, unless he had an accurate knowledge, not only of its wants, but its resources. Hence it seemed to me that a Statistical Bureau should form a prominent feature in connection with the government at Washington. It is, as I think, justly observed by the Secretary of the Treasury, in approving my plan for this purpose, that "an examination of the French and British works on general and special statistics will demonstrate the utility of a bureau at Washington devoted to inquiries concerning the population, agriculture, manufactures, minerals, internal and external commerce, banks and currency, of the United States, as primary subjects of knowledge, and as connected with similar interests in every quarter of the globe." I thought and said that a Statistical Bureau, properly organized and conducted, would, among other things, "be able to respond, promptly and correctly, to all calls by Congress for information on statistical subjects, save great waste of time and money, and furnish information highly interesting and useful to the great body of the people."

Such were the views that influenced me in proposing the establishment of this bureau, in connection with the Treasury Department. The approval which the project met with from Congress and the people satisfies me that I was right, and that the institution will be sustained.

Another subject which seemed to me to require action was the existing defects in the mode of obtaining adequate security from public officers for the faithful discharge of their trusts. Security was, indeed, required; but, being once given, it seemed doubtful if, under any circumstances, that the surety could exonerate himself

from continued liability, or the government ask for additional security. I thought this was all wrong; for, on the one hand, it imposed sometimes an intolerable and cruel burden on the surety; while, on the other, if the surety himself became insolvent, the government seemed to be without remedy or redress. Accordingly, my plan proposed that, on the one hand, new bondsmen may be required annually by the government; and that bondsmen, on proper notice, may, if they have lost confidence in the integrity of their principal, exonerate themselves from future and further liability on his account. Thus both parties — the government and the bail — would be placed on a just footing. Had such provisions been adopted in times past, the country would have been saved from loss and disgrace, and the innocent sureties from the ruin consequent on defalcations and other fashionable modes of squaring accounts with "Uncle Sam."

What would you think of me, small as my concerns are, if you should find out that I had no means of knowing either what property I owned, or where it was? Yet such has literally been, heretofore, the condition of these United States. With millions of property scattered all over the Union, there was no adequate inventory of it that could be relied on, either as a check upon roguery, or as a source of information for statistical purposes. To remedy this glaring defect, I proposed that the principal public officers should be required to cause all public property in their charge to be registered and reported annually to Congress; and I had the satisfaction of finding my resolution to that effect so warmly approved, that it was read three times successively on the day of its introduction, adopted, and sent to the Senate for concurrence.

In accordance with the same policy which had led me to promote economy and responsibility by taking inventories and renewing sureties, I recently proposed a plan for reorganizing the government offices at Washington, so as to equalize duties and salaries

with a just reference to the importance and responsibility of the labors required, and to promote at once both efficiency and a just economy. Though the wisdom of Congress has not yet sanctioned the movement, I am persuaded that, before long, it must and will prevail, not only in reference to the public offices at Washington, but to the national functionaries of whatever grade, and wherever located. Times have changed since many offices were created; and duties and responsibilities have changed with them. Why, then, should they not be overhauled, and made, one and all, to conform to those altered circumstances? I know of no good reason, and I believe none can be given. But important reforms like these require time. I have "set the ball in motion," and I am satisfied it will not be suffered to stop until those reforms are effected.

I rejoice — for the benefit of our common country, I rejoice — that the bill for the reduction of postage has at length become a law; and I cannot but feel, personally, highly gratified that the measure which I proposed in Congress some seven years ago has at last met the sanction of that body, as it had long since met the sanction of the people. In March, 1838, I moved that the Committee on the Post-office and Post-roads be instructed to inquire into the expediency of lessening the postage on letters, so as to make it only equal to the cost of transporting the mails, as nearly as may be. I repeat that it is heartily satisfactory to me, as I know it must be to you, to find that the system of reformed postage, thus foreshadowed in my resolution of 1838, has at last become the law of the land. Facilities of intercourse and of correspondence are more important, and more efficient towards preserving our admirable system of government, and binding together, by the ties of one common interest, all the members of our great and growing confederacy, than any paper constitutions or abstract theories of government can ever be. Let us see each other often, and hear from each other often, and there is no danger of our

becoming estranged. Thus this measure, valuable for its economy, is still more valuable for its political effects; and its adoption will give an impulse to the spirit of improvement in other branches of the public service.

Mechanic as I am, owing most of my success in life to the steady prosecution of one branch of mechanical pursuits, you might readily suppose, even if you had no other evidence of the fact, that, while I have thus labored to promote some of the great interests of the country, I have not been inattentive to the particular interests of my fellow-mechanics. Thus, among other measures having the same tendency, it seemed to me that I could not more effectually aid in promoting improvements in the mechanic arts, and thereby benefiting mechanics themselves, than by causing the most valuable models and inventions in the patent-office to be depicted and described in a manner that would enable the people of the whole country to know accurately their nature, structure, and uses. My propositions on this subject have met with much favor from the public journals; and I feel warranted in believing that, ere long, the objects which I had in view will be realized in a manner to be both acceptable and useful, not only to mechanics, but to the people generally throughout the Union.

The disposal of the "Smithsonian bequest" is one of the most interesting features in the miscellaneous legislation of the recent session of Congress. Several plans have been proposed for this purpose. One looked to the establishment of an immense library; another, to a sort of common-school college, for educating teachers; and a third, to the establishment of an astronomical observatory, and the yearly publication of a nautical almanac. None of these plans were bad, but none of them went far enough to suit me. It seemed to me that the benefits of all might be not only combined, but extended; and that, too, in a single bill. I therefore proposed a bill for investing enough — principal and interest — of this

Smithsonian fund, to produce an annual income of forty thousand dollars, to be distributed chiefly as premiums for promoting improvements in agriculture, manufactures and commerce, and for quickening attention to the natural sciences, and to the improvement of the common-school systems of the several states. What better mode could be proposed for realizing, in their widest extent, the views of the benevolent Smithson, by diffusing useful knowledge among mankind?

Nor, in attending to the interests of the mechanical and agricultural classes, have I suffered myself to overlook the importance of commercial and financial operations. On the contrary, the record will show that I have taken a deep interest in many matters relating to the mercantile and banking interests. I honor and uphold useful labor; and know, by my own experience, that it is a blessing, rather than a curse, that man should "earn his bread by the sweat of his brow." But it is because I thus approve of and honor labor, that I would uphold the commercial, and, upon a proper basis, the banking interests,—since, without these, labor would too often be deprived of its just reward.

In relation to banking,—believing the project of a national bank to be, if not unconstitutional, at least unwise and inexpédient,—I thought that the principles of free banking, so happily established in our own state, might be advantageously recognized wherever federal legislation extended. Accordingly, I proposed a plan for authorizing, in the District of Columbia, free banking, with certain safeguards, under the authority of the United States. I have not yet been able to see why a plan, which is working well in our own state, may not be advantageously recognized whenever congressional action is deemed necessary on such subjects.

The success of our recent embassy to China should prompt us to endeavor to extend American commerce into other secluded but not less favored regions of the globe. Among the movements

which I made for that purpose, was a proposition authorizing the president to commence diplomatic and commercial intercourse with Japan and Corea. The importance of the Japanese empire, with its fifty millions of people in a condition scarcely less civilized than the Chinese, would alone warrant the mission and the measures for which I proposed an appropriation. I cannot doubt that the period is at hand when Congress, watchful to promote all the best interests of our country, will make adequate provision for thus extending commercial intercourse into regions which furnish wide scope for the intelligent enterprise of the American people.

Having acted as chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings, it is proper that I should frankly declare to you the course I pursued respecting them, and the motives that governed me. Most of you, I am sure, know me well enough to believe me, when I say that I go for economy in all things. I hate useless expenditure, whether in public or private. But economy is not penury, and there is a fitness in things which should not be forgotten or neglected by those who have the control of public affairs. Our public buildings are not merely national property, but they represent the nation. They are part of the appropriate exponents and monuments of her wealth and of her greatness, and their use is not only for the present, but for generations yet unborn. A common barn might contain and shelter your Congress; and your presidents might live, perhaps, even more comfortably for themselves, as individuals, than they now do, in a mansion of less size and pretensions than the "White House." But what right-minded American, justly proud of our national greatness, will grumble at the expense of the capitol, as a place of meeting for the representatives of this vast and glorious confederacy? What American, deserving of the name, does not desire a suitable mansion, with appropriate furniture, for the chief magistrate of the United States,—a functionary who is expected to receive and entertain his fellow-

citizens from all parts of the Union, as well as ambassadors and visitors from foreign countries? If such Americans there be, I glory in not being one of them. I tell you frankly, my friends, that I voted freely for placing the public edifices in proper order; and I did it for the honor of my country, not for the gratification of the individuals whom your choice might call to occupy them.

As for the buildings occupied by several of the departments of the government, the reports which I submitted on behalf of the committee will abundantly show the necessity for extensive changes in regard to them. The whole country knows that the treasury and post-office departments, and the patent-office, have all, not long ago, been destroyed by fire, occasioning incalculable loss and inconvenience both to the public and to individuals. But it may astonish you to learn that, notwithstanding these repeated warnings, no measures were, until the recent session, adopted for preserving the archives and records of the war and navy departments, by constructing fire-proof edifices for their preservation. Not a single fire-proof room was occupied by either department; and, indeed, nearly half the rooms they have necessarily occupied, and still occupy, are those in private buildings, hired at a great expense, and most of them extremely inconvenient. The nation has literally, as regards these departments, outgrown its public buildings.

When you recollect that these departments contain the records of our warlike renown, the accounts of hundreds of thousands of our soldiers and sailors, and the vouchers for three or four hundred millions of dollars; and couple that with a recollection of the fate of the treasury, post-office, and patent-office buildings, I am sure there are few among you who will not approve of the appropriations I asked, for commencing a suitable fire-proof edifice for their reception and accommodation,—an edifice designed to be one of the noblest structures in the world, as the present post-office edifice, in the plans for which I took a deep interest, is one of the most beau-

tiful and convenient. The house, by a large majority, approved my plan, but the senate dissented. Time and public sentiment will show which was right.

It has been my aim, in everything connected with the national edifices and grounds, to favor such plans as tended to promote durability and good taste, as well as convenience and true economy; and I deem it due to the public officers at Washington generally, and to many of the citizens of that place, to express my cordial approbation of, and thanks for, the liberality, aid and attention, which I have uniformly received from them, in all the intercourse which my official duties rendered necessary in relation to these and other matters.

I might enumerate many other important subjects on which, as your representative, I have been called to act, and on which I have endeavored to act in such a manner as I considered most conducive to the best interests of *our whole country*. For, though your immediate representative, yet I was also a representative for the whole country; and, in matters of national concernment, I should have been recreant to my duty, had I failed to act for the good of the whole, instead of a part. In such matters I felt myself to be an American, legislating for America. It has also been my aim, generally, *to work, and not to talk*. I thought that, among two hundred and twenty-three representatives, there would be talking enough, and more than enough, without much of my aid; and I confess I have been more ambitious to be known by what I have *done* for my country, than by what I have said for it.

In conclusion, fellow-citizens, while I thank you — yes, heartily thank you — for the many marks of your confidence with which you have honored me, suffer me, in restoring to you the trusts confided, to hope that, if you cannot approve of all I have done, you will at least give me credit for honesty of intention, for zeal, industry, and fidelity.

Z. PRATT.

WASHINGTON, *March 5, 1845.*

SPEECH IN CONGRESS RESPECTING A DRY DOCK IN NEW YORK.*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am unaccustomed to public debate. Other pursuits in life have somewhat indisposed me to present my views in that collected, comprehensive, and systematic manner, which long legislative experience has enabled those to do who have preceded me in the debate upon this question. But I will, in my own crude and undigested manner, present to the consideration of the house the various facts in my possession, which, in my humble opinion, should have a bearing upon this question. I dislike the practice of consuming the valuable time of the house, as some gentlemen are wont to do, upon other matters, *irrelevant* to the subject before them ; and I have no doubt that such a practice is viewed with displeasure by the people ; but, notwithstanding my great aversion to this practice, I cannot refrain, when a question presents itself, touching, in some measure, the interests of the state I have the honor in part to represent, to give my views upon the immediate question before the house.

In the first place, the question is, whether we shall appropriate in accordance with the suggestions of the committee who reported this bill to the house, and who have, no doubt, weighed well the relative wants of the several sections of country, which have been indicated as proper places for Dry Docks ; or, whether we shall extend the provisions of the bill to embrace several, or a whole system, instead of this one provided for in the bill. There are two questions presented to my mind, when it is proposed to extend this

* Delivered in the House of Representatives, March 1st, 1839.

bill to cover other appropriations. 1st. Does the public service require more than one Dry Dock? 2d. Will the condition of the public treasury warrant the house in appropriating for more than one?

Mr. Chairman, I hold it to be the duty of governments, as well as individuals, before entering upon an enterprise requiring expenditure, to first ascertain whether they have the means to effect the object contemplated. I shall apply this golden rule to the question now before the house, before I proceed to inquire whether the public service demands at this time more than one Dry Dock.

The honorable chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means has presented to the house a very able and comprehensive report, in which he warns us against carrying on the lavish system of expenditures which has obtained within the past few years, no doubt caused from the great abundance of surplus means which distended our public treasury. I coincide with the views of that committee, and trust the house will be so far influenced by its irresistible conclusions as to cut off all appropriations but such as the public service indispensably demands. By a statement of this committee, the present resources of the treasury, for 1839, are but \$28,900,000; while the charges upon the same, for the same period (including treasury notes issued during the last year, to be redeemed, \$7,712,350) amount to \$32,876,857, leaving a deficiency of \$3,976,857. I will, however, give the language of the committee:

“To meet this deficiency, the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to sell the remaining bond of the Bank of the United States, amounting, with interest, to \$2,380,000; and there remains \$2,287,650 of the treasury notes authorized to be issued by the act of 1838, which have not yet been issued.* Should the former

* A bill was passed the house authorizing the extension of this act, to make up the contemplated deficit.

be sold, and the limitation of the treasury note act of 1837 be extended to 30th June, and no appropriations be authorized during the present session but those embraced in the foregoing statement [which did not include an appropriation for Dry Docks], there would be an estimated balance in the treasury, on the first January next, of about \$690,000. Even this balance will be reduced, by some additions which will be necessarily made, during the session, to the appropriations enumerated in the foregoing statement. Should Congress authorize the usual amount of new appropriations, and the three millions proposed for fortifications, harbors, &c., it would be necessary to provide five or six millions for the treasury, in addition to all the resources and receipts existing or contemplated."

I hope, Mr. Chairman, the house will be admonished, by the sentiments and opinions of the report of the committee, so that they will dispense with, as far as possible, all extravagance. Let us commence with this bill; for I hold to the doctrine that that which is not indispensable to the wants of the service is an inexcusable extravagance. I am of opinion that, for the present, we can do with one additional Dry Dock. The question will then suggest itself to the mind, Where shall that site be, best to enhance the public interest? I will endeavor to show, hereafter, by the facts which I have gleaned from the public documents. Indeed, I am convinced, from reading this report, that we cannot have the means of building more than one at this time, considering the large amount it will cost to construct it,—say eight hundred thousand dollars.

But I shall, in the first place, examine this in a national point of view. I will throw aside state pride, and merge the interest of the same in the great national interest. This is the ground we should all take, though, unfortunately, some gentlemen have attempted to bring this into the common vortex of a local scramble,

without regard to the public weal; but when this shall be the issue, I will not shrink from a comparison of the site contemplated for the creation of the same in my state with that of Philadelphia, or any other, or relinquish the claims of my state to that of any other state. It is deeply to be regretted that this kind of legislation has too much obtained; but it is not too late to correct it; and the sooner we do it, the better, because it will prevent the great and useless expenditure or waste of public money, which, by management and compromise, is applied to other than national objects,—which, in fact, results to the benefit of individuals, instead of government, and to their private emolument. And, unless it be stopped, there are none in this hall who can anticipate the end, nor foretell the always exhausted and deranged condition of our public treasury, the onerous taxation to replenish it, and the consequent strife, disaffection of the people, and their distrust of our institutions. Whenever I hear the question stated that A gets more of the public money than B, I feel some forebodings for the future. I feel that, should it become a settled principle in our government that B shall have as much of the money of the people as A, notwithstanding his wants are not so great,—or, in other words, that it cannot be applied to the use of B without a great waste, indeed, total loss,—I say, I feel that the great national interests, the navy, the army, and civil service, must become dilapidated, broken up; the commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing interests, be deprived of their proper stimulants; and this nation, like all others that have preceded it, become enervated, and dwindle into insignificance, and be doubted and despised by all well-regulated governments on the earth. Holding this view of the subject, what great responsibility rests upon us to use all proper means to prevent these fatal results inuring to and being realized by our posterity! We should spurn every attempt to create in the national halls any other interests than the national

interests,—those which embrace the whole country. The states, by their inherent and sovereign power, can regulate their own peculiar interests, and thereby preserve them from the overshadowing influence of the national government.

Does not the public service require that Brooklyn should be first selected as a site? When I come to consider the immense tonnage which arrives at that port, and belongs to that port, both mercantile and national, I have no misgivings in making it the first selection, if the want of the navy demand another; and, to prove that it does, I will insert below a table apposite to this subject, showing the arrivals of vessels of war, the large number repaired, &c. The repair of many of these vessels, I have been told, has been frequently delayed, for a time, for the want of a Dock; and when repaired, it is at considerable expense, caused by the removal of munitions of war, &c., and with great delay and injury to the service; all of which could be avoided by the construction of one Dock.

As some gentlemen have been pleased to refer to the number of national vessels which arrived in the port of Philadelphia, and have undergone repair at that place, the tables below will give information upon the subject, so far as relates to New York, as well as to that city.

List of armed vessels, belonging to the United States, which have entered the port of New York from November, 1828, to November, 1836, &c.

Hornet, sloop of war, November 19, 1828, thoroughly repaired.

Natchez, sloop of war, November 28, 1828, repaired.

Natchez, sloop of war, May 13, 1829.

Boston, sloop of war, July 12, 1829, thoroughly repaired.

Constellation, frigate, July 24, 1829.

Ontario, sloop of war, February, 1828, thoroughly repaired in 1829.

Peacock, sloop of war, rebuilt in 1829.

Brandywine, frigate, October 8, 1829, slightly repaired.

Vincennes, sloop of war, June 8, 1830, thoroughly repaired in 1831.
Falmouth, sloop of war, August 5, 1830, thoroughly repaired in 1831.
Potomac, frigate, July 21, 1831, finished her outfits.
Hudson, frigate, August 5, 1831.
St. Louis, sloop of war, December 11, 1831, repaired in 1832.
United States, frigate, repaired in 1831 and 1832.
Experiment, schooner, August 18, 1832.
Delaware, seventy-four, August, 1833, complete outfits, &c.
Brandywine, frigate, July 10, 1833, repaired.
St. Louis, sloop of war, July 23, 1833, repaired slightly.
Shark, schooner, September 28, 1833, repaired slightly.
Falmouth, sloop of war, February 3, 1834, repaired.
Peacock, sloop of war, May 27, 1834, repaired.
Erie, sloop of war, July 11, 1834, completed outfits.
United States, frigate, December 11, 1834.
Experiment, schooner, May 28, 1835, repaired for coast survey.
Constitution, frigate, June 23, 1835, partially repaired.
Natchez, sloop of war, October 3, 1835, repaired.
Experiment, schooner, November 28, 1835, from surveying.
Ontario, sloop of war, June 24, 1836.
Experiment, schooner, November 7, 1836, from surveying.

There arrived at Philadelphia, during the same space of time, the Warren, sloop of war, Experiment, schooner, which were slightly repaired.

The result for the last two years shows as great disparity between the two cities.

This table is for a period of eight years; and I have no doubt, upon further examination, a series of years will present the same result. I do not wish to consume the time of the house by any comments of mine upon these facts, but trust the members will draw their own deductions. Thus it will be seen that the government have been compelled to have repaired at Brooklyn, at great expense, without a dock, in the space of eight years, twenty-nine vessels of war; whereas, if there had been a Dry Dock at that

point, they could have been repaired, in all probability, at one-half the expense.

I present, also, a statement of the aggregate of arrivals of American and foreign vessels into the United States for 1837, by which we may see the great advantage of the State of New York over Pennsylvania, or other states, in a commercial point of view.

	Vessels.	Tonnage.
New York,	4,123	1,003,229
Massachusetts,	1,908	320,544
Maine,	1,379	119,687
Louisiana,	634	136,435
Maryland,	441	96,892
Pennsylvania,	441	91,830
South Carolina,	253	58,688
North Carolina,	204	25,027
Vermont,	193	27,011
Ohio,	169	7,169
Florida,	163	10,805
Rhode Island,	141	26,278
Virginia,	122	22,971
Georgia,	119	34,246
Connecticut,	110	21,411
Alabama,	92	27,531
Michigan,	72	5,035
New Hampshire,	36	10,742
District of Columbia,	29	6,844
New Jersey,	27	12,863
Total,	10,656	1,065,423

The arrival in tonnage into the State of New York is more than ten times as great as that of Pennsylvania; and, in fact, constitutes one-half of the whole tonnage of the United States.

To carry this view of the subject still further, I have had prepared a statement, comprising a period of nine years, showing the number and tonnage of vessels entered in the ports of New

York and Philadelphia, from the year 1829 to 1837 inclusive, and the amount of imports, exports and revenue, for the same period.

NEW YORK.

Year.	Vessels entered.		Amount of imports.	Amount of exports.	Net revenue.
	No.	Tonnage.			
1829	1,229	244,558	\$34,743,307	\$20,119,011	\$11,169,193.76
1830	1,534	333,778	35,624,070	19,697,983	13,003,999.81
1831	1,534	333,678	57,077,417	25,535,144	17,613,659.47
1832	1,998	395,485	53,214,402	26,000,945	12,268,521.80
1833	2,702	537,741	55,918,449	25,395,117	9,236,091.67
1834	3,494	694,892	73,188,594	13,849,460	8,035,556.38
1835	2,008	455,665	88,191,305	30,345,264	13,147,376.19
1836	1,703	401,086	118,253,416	28,920,638	17,176,908.24
1837	2,222	579,194	79,301,722	27,338,419	7,856,826.77
	18,424	3,976,077	595,512,682	217,201,981	109,510,134.09

PHILADELPHIA.

1829	385	73,454	10,100,152	4,089,935	2,766,128.12
1830	405	77,016	8,702,122	4,291,793	2,947,716.24
1831	416	79,058	12,121,083	5,513,713	3,867,794.37
1832	432	81,939	10,678,358	3,516,066	2,765,674.36
1833	370	71,487	10,451,250	4,078,951	2,074,101.07
1834	441	83,804	10,479,268	2,031,803	1,311,539.34
1835	416	78,993	12,389,937	3,739,275	2,151,583.86
1836	350	64,019	16,068,233	3,971,555	2,882,264.89
1837	438	91,715	11,680,111	3,841,599	1,526,813.16
	3,653	701,485	101,673,514	35,074,690	22,293,616.11
	14,771	3,274,592	493,839,168	182,127,291	87,216,517.98

The last of these totals gives the difference between the two ports.

The value of imports into New York, from the 10th of May, 1837, to the 10th of May, 1838, was \$58,814,645, and that of Philadelphia but \$7,732,497; and Pensacola, the other place spoken of, only \$3112; — the imports of New York city being more than half of all the importation into the United States. This table, though in a condensed form, is comprehensive. The

latter line, or total of figures, exhibits the difference,—the great disparity in the receipt of revenues in the two cities,—and, to some extent, in the States of New York and Pennsylvania. Now, according to the above tables, if we put the claims of New York upon its commercial as well as agricultural interests, the Dry Dock should be located in that state. What a disparity does the above present between the two places ! With what pride should the representatives of that great state advocate her superior claims to the favorable consideration of Congress !

I will also show, by the statement below, in parallel columns, the great disparity between the domestic exports of the two states contending for this prize, embracing a period of nine years, commencing in 1829 and ending in 1837.

PENNSYLVANIA.		NEW YORK.	
Years.	Value.	Years.	Value.
1829,	\$2,617,152	1829,	\$12,036,561
1830,	2,924,452	1830,	13,618,278
1831,	3,594,302	1831,	15,726,118
1832,	2,008,991	1832,	15,057,250
1833,	2,671,300	1833,	15,411,296
1834,	2,031,803	1834,	13,849,469
1835,	3,739,275	1835,	30,345,264
1836,	3,971,555	1836,	28,920,638
1837,	3,841,599	1837,	27,338,419
	\$27,400,429		\$172,303,293
		Pennsylvania, . . .	27,400,429
		Balance in favor of New York,	144,902,864

Some gentlemen have been pleased to place their claims upon the mechanical or boat-building interest. If this be a just criterion, and the claims of New York and Pennsylvania be tested upon this principle, to which I have no objection, New York will still be entitled to the prize ; to show which, see the following table :

Statement showing the number of vessels built, and the tonnage thereof, in each state and territory of the United States, for the year ending the 30th September, 1837.

States.	Number of vessels built.	Tons, 95ths.
Maine,	149	23,475 40
New Hampshire,	4	1,865 65
Massachusetts,	165	20,794 24
Rhode Island,	12	1,426 87
Connecticut,	59	4,421 13
New York,	136	21,999 52
New Jersey,	81	6,767 18
Pennsylvania,	65	12,033 60
Delaware,	5	344 94
Maryland,	132	10,992 29
District of Columbia,	6	946 94
Virginia,	29	1,618 14
North Carolina,	14	864 80
South Carolina,	7	938 65
Georgia,	2	332 13
Ohio,	52	10,385 00
Tennessee,	2	971 90
Alabama,		
Mississippi,		
Louisiana,	16	1,741 57
Kentucky,		
Florida,	1	71 12
Michigan,	12	995,65
	949	122,987 22

I am not disposed to find fault with the representatives of Pennsylvania, because they advocate the interests of their state, and place the claims of Philadelphia upon its most favorable footing; nor have I presented these statements to draw an invidious distinction between the two cities; but I have thought it my duty, as one of the representatives of the great State of New York, to stand up for her interests, and thereby, in my humble opinion, subserve the public interest, by advocating the construction of the Dry Dock at the Brooklyn navy-yard.

But why should I say any more upon the subject? Has not the honorable chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means told the house that this is merely a reappropriation of a sum of money,

carried to the surplus fund which had been appropriated to the building of a Dry Dock at Brooklyn, after mature consideration by the last Congress, but, owing to some difficulty in procuring the land at a moderate price, it had not been applied to this object? The same difficulty does not now present itself. The claims of the several places now contesting had been fully examined by that Congress which made this appropriation. The palm had been yielded to Brooklyn. This had been done, too, upon proper surveys. Will gentlemen withhold the just claims of New York, and thereby injure the public service, because they cannot get Dry Docks established in every section of the country, wherever their imaginations may lead them to believe they are needed? This would be not only unjust, but highly censurable.

Upon what grounds are the friends of Philadelphia disposed now to place her claims? Upon superiority of harbor? I should suppose not; for the harbor of New York is one of the best in the world, perfectly secure, affording good anchorage to any number of vessels. It can float the largest vessel in our navy. It is only two hours' sail from the ocean; whilst that of Philadelphia is insecure and contracted, and at least one hundred and fifty miles from the ocean.

New York can be approached at all seasons of the year, and vessels repaired at any time; but ice in the Delaware renders it impracticable to get to Philadelphia. But the greatest obstacle which presents itself is that the depth of water is not sufficient to float our largest vessels. The great object of a dock of this kind is to receive vessels, without reference to size, with crew, armament and munitions on board, and thus repair them, and save the trouble of removals of the same, as has to be done in the ordinary way. And if there be not sufficient depth of water at Philadelphia for this purpose, the dock would be totally useless. No information

has been furnished this house by actual survey, &c., that will disabuse our minds of this opinion.

New York is entitled to this Dry Dock, whether we consider the security and capacity of harbor, the depth of water, its proximity to the ocean, tonnage, imports and exports, revenues, taxes ; in fine, her general, commercial, agricultural or mechanical interests. And whilst I am speaking of her commerce, I will present one fact in relation to that of Philadelphia. The arrivals of foreign vessels into the port of New York have progressively increased for the last fifty years ; whilst it appears from statistics upon this subject, lately published, that the foreign arrivals into Philadelphia, at the present time, are not more than they were in 1788. Its coasting trade has considerably increased, but I think not in the same proportion as that of New York.

The mechanics of New York are as skilful, and labor, if not cheaper, is as cheap, as at Philadelphia, and the facility of procuring building materials for vessels is as great. But, above all, the public interest demands that New York should have it. Why, then, withhold it ?

I have also prepared a statement of the operations of the two cities in gold and silver, for a period embracing eight years, from 1831 to 1838, both inclusive :

NEW YORK CITY.

	Imported in eight years.	Exported in eight years.
Gold bullion,	\$3,595,310	\$171,827
Silver bullion,	1,963,547	246,420
Gold specie,	21,874,590	2,914,908
Silver specie,	18,660,441	14,958,329
	\$46,093,888	\$18,291,484

PHILADELPHIA CITY.

Gold bullion,	\$50,587	
Silver bullion,	436,970	\$33,514
Gold specie,	405,416	325,565
Silver specie,	1,821,085	3,383,634
	\$2,714,058	\$3,642,713

But, to return to the cry of some gentlemen as to the inequality of expenditures. I think New York pays as much, if not more, into the public treasury, in the way of taxes,—having reference to her population,—as any other state in the Union. Have the disbursements, upon the same principle, been greater in this state than in other sections of the Union, and particularly Pennsylvania? I think not. The building at New York — the custom-house — which the government is erecting for its own accommodation, has been referred to by gentlemen who are in favor of erecting this dock further south. They have, with great emphasis, denominated it a palace, a waste of money, &c. This was not erected solely, let me tell gentlemen, with a view of beautifying New York. It has been constructed of permanent materials, and of great capacity, such as the interests and wants of the government demanded. I hope all objection will vanish when I tell gentlemen that the erection of the same has cost the government but one per cent. upon the revenue netted at that port for the last ten years; and I very much question whether Philadelphia, with her splendid mint and navy-yard, or any other section of the country, can present the same picture as a justification for the amounts they have received of the bounties of the government. I think, all told, that New York can present a better claim for future disbursements there than the places above cited.

To conclude, sir, it is with pleasure that I recur to the state of prosperity which New York now presents. The representatives

of this great state can with pride say, she has within her precincts the main artery of the Union; that she diffuses the life-blood through the whole commercial system, as the foregoing statistics irrefutably demonstrate. We are proud that she is so; not from local, narrow views, but because she tends so much to add to the honor and fame of the *whole United States*. I go for my country, sir, and that which will best benefit it in the aggregate; and whenever I am satisfied of the *utility* of an appropriation in a national point of view, I will ever be found ready to record my vote in its favor, let it be at the north or the south, the east or the west; and all I ask is, that gentlemen would legislate on equally liberal principles, as I have no doubt that they will.

SPEECH RESPECTING THE TREASURY BUILDING.*

I AM altogether unused to public speaking, but hope that I may be allowed to claim the attention of the committee while offering to them a few practical observations upon the subject under consideration. I am glad that the discussion has, thus far, been mainly carried on in a business-like manner. This pleases me the more, because it strengthens me in the hope that my own unadorned and plain mode of expressing my views will meet the indulgence of the committee.

Having been placed upon this Committee of Public Buildings, and the subject of the fitness for its intended purposes of the new treasury building having been brought to my attention, I have looked at the matter in the same practical manner in which I usually go about my own affairs. Thus viewing the building, I was not long in coming to the opinion that it was all wrong, both in the matter of taste and in the matter of execution. It was at my request and suggestion that the committee had examined the building personally. I believed it to be going wrong; and the examination had tended to confirm, not to confute, that opinion. At first the proposition personally to inspect this building was not favored by the committee, although it had at last been acceded to. And here I will take the occasion of paying a merited tribute to the singleness of purpose and purity of motive which dictated the course of the members of the committee, of both political parties, in reference to this subject, from first to last. I would partic-

* Delivered in the House of Representatives, June 8, 1838.

ularly instance, in this connection, the course pursued by the honorable chairman of that committee [Mr. Lincoln], in regard to the furnishing and repairs of the executive mansion. He, as well as the honorable gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Mercer], though a political opponent, was as liberal and fair as any friend of the administration could have desired. They had acted with the spirit of business men; and could honestly answer to the country, with the rest of the committee, that they had discharged their duty faithfully and conscientiously.

For myself, I have for years been practically engaged in building. I cannot avoid, therefore, looking at the work submitted to my examination in a practical point of view. I intend, in doing so, to do my duty, and to be useful, if possible, to the country, whose servant I am. I knew well the responsibility I assumed, and have not shrunk from it. The whole committee concurred with me in taking great pains to be enabled to lay before the house all the facts upon which the report which accompanied the bill under consideration had been founded. It is now the province of the house to judge for itself as to the validity of the committee's conclusions from those facts. The committee have counted the cost; they have come to the deliberate conclusion that the public money is being wasted on this unlucky piece of work, and they have told the house that such is their opinion.

The length of the treasury building, as it stands, is four hundred and fifty-six feet, the lower hall is eight feet two and a half inches wide, and the upper hall nine feet. I assume, as a demonstrable fact, that this is far too narrow. It may be compared to the hall of the new patent-office, now in process of erection, which is a little over one hundred feet in length, and fifteen in width. Nearly half the treasury building is so constructed as to be underground, which will have the inevitable effect of rendering thirty-

seven of the rooms, at least, proposed to be made upon that floor, too dark and too damp for use.

This building, which Congress ordered to be built under the direction of the President of the United States has not been executed according to the directions given by General Jackson, who expressly stipulated that the building should not interfere at all with the State Department,—a building nearly new, and which cost the country over one hundred thousand dollars. But, by the plan of the architect now engaged on this building, it seems that this department is to come down, at an admitted loss of some ninety thousand dollars. I look upon this as miserable economy, indeed. The new erection is now within three or four feet of the State Department; and, owing to the different heights of the walls of the two buildings, it is quite obvious that they can never be made to match. White and black could not differ more widely than the two from each other; and is this a specimen of workmanship and of taste for an American citizen to point out to the stranger who may visit the capital of his country? I think not.

Mr. P. then went into a series of statements, by way of exposing some of the prominent imperfections of the building,—its entire want of adaptation to its purposes, the unfitness of the architect who designed it, and the palpable necessity which existed for taking it down, as a matter of the best and most prudent economy. He took the statement of the architect himself, as contained in the National Intelligencer, in a communication signed M, and which was as follows :

The architect's estimate for completing the present

building, under the construction, is	\$500,000
Expense of simply grading the street, without including the cost of culvert underneath,	2,500
Total cost,	502,500
40*	

Estimate for carrying out the whole plan, as approved by the executive, including the renewal of the State Department building, and constructing a correspond- ing building at the south end,	\$397,500
Whole cost,	900,000

And showed that, in 1837, this architect's own estimates were not much more than half that sum. In commenting on this discrepancy, Mr. P. remarked that he was compelled to say that this architect's rule in building was like that adopted by a certain Irish journeyman he had heard of, who, as he could neither read nor write, dispensed with the draughts, and said he could work best by his eye! It seems to be the maxim of this architect to "cut and try."

In reply to some remarks of the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. Keim], who addressed the committee on this bill, and in behalf of the architect of the treasury building, Mr. P. observed, that that gentleman's estimate of the thickness of the walls, at three feet three inches, was entirely erroneous. I had been told so before, and had taken the trouble to measure them for myself with the rule. Their thickness was only eighteen inches stone, filled inside with brick nine inches, making only a thickness of two feet three inches in all; and this for the walls of a building three stories or forty-eight feet high! The gentleman from Pennsylvania, in his zeal to endorse the character, as an architect, of Mr. Mills, had stated, upon the authority of the latter, what I knew, from my own personal observation, to be inaccurate. I do not rest content with hearsay. My highest ambition, in making out a case, is to state facts.

Mr. P. alluded to some remarks which had fallen from the member from Arkansas [Mr. Yell], who had expressed the opinion that the present building was adequate to the purposes for which it was

designed. Mr. P. said, I will ask that learned judge a simple question. How is light to be obtained in the lower story of the hall of that building, four hundred and fifty-six feet long, eight feet wide, with both ends closed,—one-half of the story being under ground, and a high wall in front of the building, and ascending to the next story,—how can he obtain sufficient light, in such a hall, for the most necessary purposes for which light is required?

These walls should have been at least three feet and six inches thick; and the iron bands are now precisely in the position where they are least useful, namely, at the corners, and not at the antæ, where, if at all, they should be.

[Mr. P. entered into a particular statement of the number of rooms which it was a part of the plan to put into the building, many of which he demonstrated must be entirely unfit for use, by reason of the want of light and the dampness. He also showed great errors in the calculations of the cost of executing different parts of the work, and demonstrated the entire want of anything like a fixed plan of proceeding, on the part of the architect, from first to last. He thought it the duty of the legislative branch of the government to take the execution of this and similar works into its own hands, believing, as he did, that the duties of the executive were already sufficiently onerous, without superadding those of master-builder of the public offices. The legislature, he contended, should attend to these matters itself, and carry them on by appointments emanating from itself, of men in whom confidence could be placed, and who would be responsible to Congress for the manner in which they did their duty. This would be the course, he said, that each man would pursue in his own case, not only in architecture, but in law, in commerce, and in every other department of life.]

This is the building of the nation, and not mine. I have here strung out facts which I have ascertained, by careful examination,

for the benefit of those concerned. It is proper to act as they see fit. On them rests the responsibility. I have shown them that their money is being uselessly lavished, almost without any accountability on the part of those intrusted with its expenditure. And here I would remark upon the meagreness and unsatisfactory character of the accounts rendered by the Commissioner of Public Buildings, who has put down a gross amount of estimates, with a long string of *dittos*, instead of giving particular statements of every item of expenditure. This is not the way I do my business, and I am not inclined to permit that of the country to be done in that loose and unsatisfactory manner. I certainly do not intend to impute anything like default to that officer; but what I want are the facts, that we may be able to act understandingly.

In the inquiry ordered by the house, as a part of the duty of the Committee on Public Buildings, they had had the aid of experienced and disinterested architects from New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Vermont, not one of whom sustained the views and statements of the architect of public buildings; and I have already said enough, in other portions of my remarks, to convince the house that the statements of that architect have not always been correct, or consistent with themselves, in relation to this subject. He has deceived two presidents already, and is seemingly disposed to lead the country into an expense of some three millions of dollars to carry on this extravagant project of his,—and should this be allowed? What is the proposed alternative? To cause the walls of this building to be taken down, and its materials used for the erection of the post-office, and then to erect a substantial and economical treasury building, according to a feasible and reasonable plan, as proposed in the bill under consideration. And what will be the expense of taking down and removing these walls? The following estimate is made by Mr. Mills, which can probably be relied on safely:

1st. The present expenditures on this building amount to	\$200,065.79
2d. The value of the materials and work, when taken out and removed to a place of safety, with those on the ground, is estimated at	97,800.00
3d. The site being changed would render it unnecessary to regrade and pave 15th-street, and construct a culvert under the same, estimated at (which deduct)	20,000.00
Making the total estimated loss	\$82,265.79
4th. In the event of removing the building, there will be no necessity to take down or alter the State Department building, which cost one hundred thousand dollars; and the saving here, which might properly be carried to the <i>credit</i> of the account, would be	80,000.00
Leaving an actual loss of only	\$2,265.79

But I fear I am troubling the committee beyond their patience. I will relieve them. I am no friend to long speeches; and what I dislike in others I will not myself inflict on them. I went into this inquiry, and into this discussion of the subject, in a practical way, as a business man. The building which is the subject of present consideration is not mine, Mr. Chairman, but yours. It is for you to act as you please upon the advice which has now been given you. If you take it, well and good; if not, do not complain, if you find, when too late, that it had been better to follow it. The passage of this bill will save the country at least half a million of dollars. The building now erecting, if permitted to go on, will cost more, ere it is completed, than its erection thus far has cost. With these plain facts, stated thus plainly, I leave the decision of the question to the house, where it properly belongs.

SPEECH ON THE INCREASE OF THE SALARIES OF CLERKS.*

I AM opposed to the motion of the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Dromgoole]. By a prudent application of the salaries they now receive, it is a competency to support them in genteel style. I infer, from the quarter in which the amendment originated, and the ready support which it received by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. Petriken], there should strong suspicions attach to it.

I am not astonished that these gentlemen should step forward to take care of those who belong to their state by birth. They are governed by a kind of state pride, in the matter. I have examined into the condition of the departments of government in this respect, to ascertain whether the state I in part represent has her quota in the public service of the country ; and I am somewhat astonished to find that the sons of Virginia receive from the government more than five hundred thousand dollars, and Pennsylvania two hundred thousand dollars, in the way of salaries, whilst the great State of New York receives not more than fifty thousand dollars !

I have prepared statements to show this result, but will not detain the house to read them. I am opposed to any increase ; and am astonished to find some gentlemen, who talk so much about extravagant expenditures, so ready to come forward to heap large salaries upon non-producing officials,—but when any proposition to do justice to the working-men in the employ of the government is before us, they spurn it from them. These are the men who

* Delivered in the House of Representatives, Feb. 25, 1829.

deserve and need the assistance and protection of Congress. Their faces are ground into the dust, whilst those less worthy are pampered in indolence.

These perfumed whig office-holders, who push themselves forward as the leaders of the *ton*, shall never receive my vote to increase the means to promote luxurious extravagance, and to increase their indolence. Gentlemen in the opposition need not apprehend that an increase of salary would be giving these officials the means to assist in perpetuating this administration. No; there need be no fears upon that score. But, on the other hand, it would be voting means to overthrow the present administration; for it can be proved, beyond controversy, that more than two-thirds of them are opposed to it.

I do not wish to be understood as casting any imputation upon them; but, on the other hand, I have an exalted opinion of many. I would ask gentlemen to look to the working-men in the employment of the government, who work from sun to sun, in this district, and emphatically and in truth earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, and receive probably the pittance of one dollar and fifty cents per day. It is those who should receive an increase of their pay,—those who are contributing to build up your navy, and adding to the glory of the country. They are equally if not more meritorious, and their employment is equally intellectual, as those who are the mere scribes or examiners of other men's inventions. I sincerely wish that I could contribute to pay this class of men more in accordance with their merits, industry, and efficiency. I hope the amendment will be rejected; but, if there is to be an increase, let it be done in the proper manner, at the next session, including the working-men, as well as the clerks.

LETTER RESPECTING WHITNEY'S RAIL-ROAD PROJECT.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES:

THE subject of a passage across our continent to the Pacific is exciting the attention of the public mind to such an extent as makes it necessary for every statesman and citizen, interested in the welfare, prosperity and future greatness, of our country, to examine the subject, for his own satisfaction, at least.

Two routes and modes are proposed to accomplish this great object. One, by a canal or railroad somewhere from Panama to Tehuantepec, in Mexico, between latitude north seven and sixteen degrees; and the other, a railroad from Lake Michigan through the Rocky Mountains to Oregon, on the parallel of about forty-two and a half degrees,—all in our own territory. I wish, first, to consider the canal, to see what it would and would not do, and how we can build it.

The Hon. Mr. Wheaton (late minister at Berlin), in his very able letter to the Secretary of War, shows that he has studied the subject, and made himself acquainted with all the lights then before the world; and even he leaves all in doubt and conjecture. If it can be done at all, it must be by the combined efforts and influence of all the different commercial nations interested. The English reviewers take the same view, giving to each nation its proportionate interest and influence, comparative with its amount of commerce with Asia, which, of course, would give the entire control to England. Would the people of the United States submit

to such control? And does the constitution provide for the forming and carrying on such a copartnership? Clearly not.

In Gen. Garella's very able, and the only scientific, report of a survey of Panama, in the years 1842 and 1843, with a corps of engineers, under the orders of the French government, he takes up and examines the routes of Nicaragua and Tehuantepec. His estimate for the former is about one hundred and forty-eight million francs, for the latter one hundred and fifty-one million four hundred and fifty thousand francs, and for Panama one hundred and forty-nine million to one hundred and sixty-five million francs. These estimates may be considered conjectural, as he says he had no comparison as a basis. It would be subject to every possible embarrassment,—the sparse population of a lawless character, no security of person or property, and the Mexican government unable to enforce the laws, if she had them. A strong military force would be absolutely necessary, from one end to the other, both to support and protect the works and the commerce. There is an entire absence of material; laborers are to be taken from a northern clime and local position,—the latter so uncongenial as to render it almost, if not quite, impossible to sustain the former. Therefore the work could not be done, protected, or commerce carried on. It is fair to presume the results would far exceed Gen. Garella's estimates. In fact, another estimate made by him for Tehuantepec is as high as one hundred and eighty-one million four hundred and fifty thousand francs; and, from all our experience in such estimates, and the fact that the people of the north cannot live in such a climate,—the winter months so rainy, and summer so hot, that no men could work or stand it,—we have good reason to believe that the actual cost would very far exceed any estimate made. Gen. Garella abandons all other plans as inferior, and devotes all his efforts to Panama.

Now, the questions are, Can we do this work?—and how?—

and what would be the probable results? It is, I think, perfectly clear that our government cannot furnish means, nor enter into such a copartnership. Then, if done, it must be done by individuals. Would Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond, Charleston, and even New Orleans, furnish capital to build a thoroughfare, and population for a city, to carry on a commerce under another government, in the benefits of which they cannot participate, nor derive any income for their capital? This is what no business man would do. And now let us see if this would be so. We will suppose the canal built, and all the commerce of Europe with Asia passing through it. Europe would furnish her own vessels for both sides. A ship canal, and no transshipments required,—and, I ask, what benefit would any city on all the Atlantic or gulf coast derive from it? Surely none. In a political point of view, it would place all the marine, naval and commercial, of all Europe, permanently at our doors, in the most commanding position; and, as to our own commerce with Asia, would it be benefited at all by this change of route? Our commerce with Asia is not large, owing to the fact that climate, distance and expense, prevent an exchange of commodities,—which difficulties could not be removed by a canal. The climate would forbid the passage of our produce through it. Nearly all our commerce with Asia is with China, consisting of teas, silks, etc., and being mostly consumed north of Charleston, would receive no benefit from this route; but, on the contrary, would be subject to delays, losses, dangers, and damages from climate; and any benefit to the small amount which might, perhaps, be taken directly up the Mississippi, as far as the mouth of Ohio, would be more than overbalanced by the delays and damage of climate, which none but those acquainted with the business can understand. And would the states and cities north of the gulf furnish means to the amount of from thirty to fifty millions of dollars, and submit to such a tax,

barely to put out of their possession, and under another government, the route for a commerce which they cannot participate in, or ever control? Clearly not. Such, it appears to me, would be the result of the canal, even with all the success predicted. It would be productive to us of nothing but evil. We have declared to the world that we will not submit to any foreign intervention or control of the affairs of this continent; and at the same time propose to enter into an alliance offensive and defensive, whereby we yield the control of the commerce of the world, check and retard our prosperity and destiny for half a century at least, and finally end in a desperate, bloody, and expensive war.

The object of a canal, or railroad, is to shorten the route from Europe to Asia, and, if possible, bring that commerce, which has controlled the world from time immemorial, across this continent; and, by lessening the expense, shortening the time and distance, and facilitating and increasing intercourse, to increase that commerce by a further and more diversified exchange of commodities. Barely substituting one route for another could not increase, because that alone could not create or produce any new means to sustain it. If a new route opens to production a wilderness, and thereby increases population with means to sustain it, and affords an exchange of commodities, it would, of course, increase commerce; or, a new route which would greatly lessen expenses of transit, save much time, increase and facilitate intercourse, would naturally increase an exchange of commodities, and would also increase commerce. But neither of these desirable and all-important results can be gained by a canal, because a canal or railroad across any part of the isthmus could not open to settlement and production an extent of wilderness country, as it is not there,—nature here having fixed the bounds, over which the genius of man cannot dominate; climate, sterility and all, obstruct his course. And it could not shorten distance and time, lessen expense, or

facilitate and increase intercourse, as I will show by giving the exact distances to be performed, both around the cape and through a proposed canal, as given to the public by Mr. Whitney, and from the authority of Professor Wittish, of the London University.

To Valparaiso :

	Miles.
From Plymouth to Realijo, via canal,	5,478
Thence to Valparaiso,	3,500
	8,978
To Valparaiso, around Cape Horn,	9,400
	422
Difference in favor of canal only	
From Sidney to England, via proposed canal,	14,848
From Sidney to England, via Cape Horn,	13,848
	1,000
Against canal,	
From Canton to England, via canal, S. W. Moons,	15,558
From Canton to England, via Cape G. H., do.	14,940
	618
Against canal,	
From Plymouth to Singapore, via canal, N. E. Moons,	16,578
From Plymouth to Singapore, via Cape G. H., do.	14,350
	2,228
Against canal,	

From this it appears that, if the means could be furnished, the canal completed, no difficulties in its operation and progress, the commerce of Europe with Asia could never be changed to this route. And there are further, and almost, if not quite, insurmountable difficulties, yet to name. The climate would not only destroy commodities of commerce, but population. A hurricane, bars, navigation, shoals, rocks, and no harbors. The Commercial Review, of New Orleans, for July estimates the destruction of vessels and property, for eighteen months' commerce of the gulf, at

one hundred and fifty vessels,— value, cargo and all, six millions of dollars.

And should we alone attempt to get a canal across the isthmus anywhere, it would force Europe to try and get a route across Suez, or through Russia. But, as we have the route within our own territory which would forever give us the entire control of the commerce and travel of all the world, and the means costing us nothing to accomplish it, I think it decidedly and clearly our duty to commence it at once, and have it done, and not lose all by looking after that which can do us no good. Mr. Whitney's plan for a railroad from Lake Michigan, through the south pass of the Rocky Mountains, to Oregon, is so plain and simple that any common mind can understand it. He asks Congress to appropriate sixty miles wide of the public lands, from Lake Michigan to the Pacific, for this special purpose; and, as he builds the road, he takes the land to reimburse himself. For eight hundred miles, the one-half, at the government price, it is estimated will build the road. The other half creates a fund for where the lands are poor. When completed, the road to be free to all the world, except for repairs and operations, to be fixed by Congress. The distance from the lake to the ocean is two thousand four hundred miles; the estimated cost, when ready for use, seventy millions of dollars. The number of acres required is ninety-two million one hundred and sixty thousand waste land, one thousand two hundred miles without timber or navigable streams, and of small value. And would it ever settle, or be of any value, without the road? Clearly not. Then the question is, Shall Mr. Whitney take these lands, and, by sale and settlement thereof, build this road, or shall they be allowed to fritter away, without any perceptible good? This great highway of nations,— the greatest work ever done by men or nations, —a road which must forever be the thoroughfare between all Europe and Asia,— a work which will bring us together as one

family, binding us with a band of iron, which cannot be sundered, both useful in war and peace,— a work which will give us the command of and make the commerce of all the world tributary to us, adding millions of wealth to the nation, and ten-folding its population,— a work which shall change the condition of all mankind, bringing all together as one nation in free intercourse and exchange of commodities,— a work which must be the means of civilizing and Christianizing the heathen, the barbarian, and the savage,— shall these waste wilderness lands be applied to this noble, this more than glorious purpose? I cannot doubt all will say, yes.

When we look at the past, and see how civilization has travelled west, bringing commerce and the useful arts with it,— when we see that civil and religious liberty was driven to this continent, as its apparent last resting-place,— when we see the progress and even strides of these United States in wealth and greatness,— when we see this vast, this rich continent, yet a wilderness before us, the best climate and country, and under the best government, the sun ever shone upon, more congenial to grow the whole man than any other part of the globe, placed directly in the centre of the earth,— Europe with more than two hundred and fifty millions of souls on the one side, with the Atlantic three thousand miles wide between us, and on the other side all Asia with seven hundred millions of souls, and the Pacific a little more than five thousand miles between us,— when we reflect that the earth does not produce enough to sustain the vast multitudes on either side, and there is nowhere for them to go but to us,— and when we know that the building of this great road will open to settlement, production, and intercourse with all the parts of the globe, this vast wilderness of two thousand five hundred miles in extent, can we doubt that it is our destiny and paramount duty to go forward and accomplish it? Clearly not!

Mr. Whitney proposes to start his road somewhere on Lake

Michigan, where he can find the lands unoccupied, and thence across the Mississippi, near Prairie du Chien, in the parallel of about forty-three degrees; and thence over to the Missouri, between Council Bluffs and the Big Sioux; thence to the Pass, on the parallel of about forty-two and a half degrees; thence to the best point on the Pacific — San Francisco, or the Columbia river. This route or starting-point would seem absolutely necessary. First, the route must be where the rivers can be bridged; the starting-point must be from where the lands can be made immediately available for means, and where the good lands can furnish means for the part where the land is poor, and to furnish timber for the road and for the buildings where there are none. The plan could not be carried out from a starting-point west of the lake, because there would not be a sufficient amount of lands on the route to insure success, and because the expense of transportation of material to any other point would cost so much as to forbid the work. And it is not material to the states, as all would join this at or near the Mississippi,—making this the most central for all the Atlantic cities and for New Orleans, and being about the centre of the continent. New England and New York would have their Buffalo and Erie roads, through Ohio; Pennsylvania, to Pittsburgh, and through Ohio; Baltimore, to Wheeling, and through Ohio, two hundred miles nearer than New York; Richmond, her direct and best of all the routes to Cincinnati, and then onward; Charleston, to Nashville and Louisville, or direct through the entire State of Illinois; and New Orleans, with the Father of Rivers always navigable, to the Ohio; while St. Louis would have the Mississippi and Missouri, and her railroad up the Missouri valley, the first to reach it,—all equally well located, and sharing in all its benefits. Thus uniting and bringing all together at one grand centre, distant from ocean to ocean, from either city, not over three thousand four hundred miles,—performed at a moderate speed in

eight days, and at thirty miles per hour in five and a half days; and with the magnetic telegraph, outrunning the sun by twelve hours,—placing us on the Pacific directly opposite to all Asia,—distant from Japan but four thousand miles, from China but five thousand four hundred miles, from Australia but six thousand, from New Guinea five thousand three hundred and forty, and from Singapore seven thousand six hundred and sixty miles. From London or Liverpool, latitude about fifty degrees, to New York, is about three thousand miles, to be added to the above, when we have the direct route from Europe to all Asia, and much shorter than any other route possible to be accomplished. These distances appear so much shorter than those for the route across the isthmus, that an explanation is required. First, we start from London, latitude fifty degrees, and cross the isthmus in from seven degrees to sixteen degrees north latitude, and about ninety degrees west longitude; thence to Canton, latitude about twenty-three degrees and east longitude one hundred and thirteen and three-fourths degrees, or about one hundred and seventy degrees of longitude, each degree of longitude full sixty miles,—making, from the terminus of the canal to Canton, over ten thousand two hundred miles. Whereas, from the Columbia river, latitude forty-six and one-half degrees, to Shanghai, latitude about thirty-two degrees and east longitude one hundred and twenty-two degrees, where all the commerce of China would centre, is one hundred and ten and one-half degrees of longitude, measuring on this parallel about forty-seven miles each,—a distance of five thousand four hundred miles. Thus it will be seen that, for a vessel bound from the terminus of a canal across the isthmus to China, the shortest and best route would be first to the Columbia river, and then to China. Thus we see that this would gain over that of the isthmus from London to China three thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight miles; to Australia, five thousand four hundred and forty miles;

to Singapore, one thousand three hundred and ninety-eight miles ; and New York gains over Europe about three thousand miles to all these places. This seems to be nature's route. On this belt,—this line around the globe,—is almost all the population of the world. On this line is, and will be, the greatest production of breadstuffs and meat,—the sustenance of man and commerce,—adding wealth to the nation. The only route which can, of itself, furnish the means to build the road, or where the labor of man can make it available, nature has here smoothed the way, and opened the mountains to let us pass. Then look at our picture, our position with this road completed. Behold, with one hand, we reach out over the Pacific to the millions of Japan, China, and all Asia, with our manufactures, our cotton, our tobacco, our hemp, our rice, our flour, our corn, beef, pork, leather, and all our many and various products, and receive back in exchange their teas, coffee, sugar, spices, indigo, drugs, silks, and various useful and curious fabrics, with gold, silver, and precious stones,—all, too, with our ships and our own men ; and with the other hand, over the broad Atlantic, we offer to all Europe our various products in exchange for hers, and receive her surplus population, to whom we give a home, a country,—while our body draws to it and controls the rich commerce and wealth of all the world, spreading and circulating from ocean to ocean through every artery, through every city from Texas to Maine ; and from the heart, the great centre, would spring and flow forth throughout the whole frame, the whole system, the life, the products of man's labor from the earth, which would control and sustain all.

The picture is grand, and might be considered a vision, had it any other foundation than the wilderness earth, which by the labor of man is to bring forth all we want, and at the same time richly reward that labor. It is a great plan, a great work ; but we are the people to do big things. This we have only to commence ; it

works itself. Build the first mile, and it prepares the way for another. The settler has the means of free transit to market, and his labor is wanted on the road; he is at once made independent and happy. It is the poor man's road, his hope, and promise. It is the farmer and mechanic who will receive the greatest benefit; their small means and their labor on the road could purchase the land for forty to sixty acres; their labor and crops would be immediately wanted on the road; and if a surplus, find a free transit to market. Villages and cities would spring up from one end to the other, all independent and happy; because the free intercourse with all the world would afford a full reward for labor.

Then, will you take your money, and send it out of our country, to be used against your interest, or will you have the Oregon road, which will cost you nothing but your votes? Mr Whitney does not ask for one dollar in money, nor will he subject any man to one cent of taxation. He does not even ask a survey for his route; all he desires is, that the waste wilderness land may be placed so that, by sale and settlement, the means in money and labor can be produced to build the road, and when the road is completed, to be under the control of Congress,—of the people,—and no dividends. All this he proposes at his own risk and hazard; and if it fails, the people lose nothing, as no part of the lands would be granted to him faster than the road is built. It appears to me that this is no mysterious affair,—a plain, simple business plan,—grand and sublime, it is true, but as simple as grand.

I examined this subject nearly three years ago. I then endorsed it, and presented Mr. Whitney's first memorial to the twenty-eighth Congress. Since that time it has grown upon the public mind; and I believe the people will have it, and the sooner the better.

Z. PRATT.

PRATTSVILLE (*Greene Co., N. Y.*), Aug. 28, 1847.

CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING FREE TRADE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
Washington, May 27, 1846. }

HON. ZADOCK PRATT.

DEAR SIR: As the tariff bill will at an early day be called up for discussion in the House of Representatives, and we are desirous of obtaining the views of distinguished gentlemen who are themselves largely interested in American manufactures, and equally desirous to promote the welfare of their country, by placing at its disposal whatever information relative to any particular branch of domestic industry they may possess, we therefore most respectfully request you to communicate to us such facts and views in regard to the policy of continuing the present high duties upon leather, and all manufactures of leather, as your leisure will permit. This we are induced to believe you are eminently capable of doing, from your great experience, and the very great amount of capital and labor you have engaged in tanning. Having given so many evidences of sound discrimination, as well as of public spirit, we hope, not only that you will oblige us by a full statement of your views as regards the effect and propriety of high and low duties upon the leather trade and tanning, but also any other facts and suggestions that may impart information.

Very respectfully, your ob't serv'ts,

E. W. HUBBARD,

D. S. REID,

J. J. MCKAY.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May* 28, 1846.

GENTLEMEN : I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note, dated the 27th, in which, after alluding to the business in which I have been extensively engaged for many years, you ask me to enumerate such facts and views in regard to the policy of continuing the present high duties upon leather as my experience may suggest.

In answering briefly your note, I have to say that it is not my purpose to offer at this time any opinion upon the effects of high or low duties upon the revenue, or the best mode of raising money to defray the expenses of government. I have full confidence that the administration and Congress now in power will give to those subjects all the consideration which their importance demands, with a view to doing equal justice to all classes and interests in our country; I can only give you a few practical observations bearing upon a single branch of business in which I have been for many years largely engaged,—that of manufacturing hemlock sole-leather, of which my product has averaged nearly one hundred thousand sides per year. A large portion of the raw hides manufactured in this country are imported principally from South America; the amount for the last year being three million eight hundred thousand dollars in value, while little, if any, sole-leather is imported. Formerly, these hides were mostly purchased with gold and silver, or bills on England; but latterly, with flour, lumber, and cotton goods,—in short, wholly with the produce and manufactures of our own country. England admits raw hides, bark, and other articles used in tanning and finishing leather, duty free; and, prior to 1842, raw hides were admitted into our country free of duty. The manufacture has steadily increased, until it has become a branch of useful industry ranking as the third or fourth in magnitude in the country. We are beginning to find a market in England for our leather, while our forests of hemlock and oak, and

abundant water-power,—which must always be cheaper in a new country than in an old one,—and our superior facilities for transportation, coupled with the fact that more labor is performed by the American mechanic, who can make a better article, and furnish it cheaper, than any other in the world, enable us to compete with other countries. I have no doubt that we can supply not only our own wants, but that we can ultimately furnish the English market, and perhaps the markets of the world, as plentifully and certainly as the Southern States now furnish them with the great staple of cotton. A single fact may serve to illustrate the view I have here given. The bark used for tanning costs here, in the country, from two to three dollars the cord, and from six to eight dollars in the cities; whilst in England the bark costs from sixteen to twenty dollars. The American improvements in the mode of extracting the tan and making leather are, in my judgment, destined to work as great a revolution as Whitney's cotton-gin did in the great staple of the south; and the time is not far distant when we shall export millions of dollars' worth annually of our leather, and furnish the entire English market. We must look to South America principally for raw hides; they cannot be furnished in sufficient quantity at home. It would be ruinous, therefore, to increase the duties upon hides, because a corresponding benefit cannot be derived from any duty which may be levied upon imported leather. I would rather see hides admitted free here, as they do in England; indeed, I believe they ought to be free, as leather is an article indispensably necessary for rich and poor; and the consumption evidently greater with the poor than any other class, whilst tea and coffee can be dispensed with. As one of a class of citizens largely engaged in the manufacture of sole-leather, I have only to add that we ask nothing but equal rights and privileges,—a fair field and no favor. Give us this, and we ask no more at the hands of government; we can safely compete with the manufacture of any other country on

the globe ; and if we do not, the fault is in ourselves, and does not deserve any sympathy at your hands.

I am sorry to add that the leather trade at the present time is greatly depressed, and affords the least gain that I have ever known.

I have the honor to be yours, truly,

Z. PRATT.

To Messrs. E. W. HUBBARD, DAVID }
S. REID, and J. J. MCKAY. }

A P P E N D I X.

THE TANNER.*

A WORD of cheer to the hearty tanner

And a blessing on his trade !

A hemlock bough shall be his banner,

Over all the land displayed.

Amid the forest giants winding,

He marks the noblest for his spoil ;

While, far away, the hunter's coil

Round the wild bull's neck is binding.

Work on, ye woodsmen all,

And let the axe resound !

Work on ! joy to the land

Where working-men abound !

His labor gives the world protection

In an ever-changing form ;

From the summer sun's reflection,—

From the winter's raging storm.

It guards the tread of the sturdy yeoman,

And guides his plough-horse over the mead ;

It reins the patriot's battle steed,

And adorns the lovely foot of woman.

Work on, ye pitmen all,

And let the hide be sound !

Work on ! joy to the land

Where working-men abound !

* Adapted to the tune of Marseilles Hymn.

The wit and lore of bygone ages
His labor saves from swift decay ;
It guards the Bible's holy pages,
And grasps the follies of the day.
It aids the loom's bright imitation,
By turning every busy wheel ;
It sheathes the warrior's flashing steel,
And bears the stream to stay the conflagration.
Work on, ye tanners all,
And let the song go round !
Work on ! joy to the land
Where working-men abound !

THE HEMLOCK TREE.

THE hemlock grows in the dark old wood,
Where the moss is damp and green ;
To a ripe old age it has bravely stood,
And full many a storm has seen.
Its shining spray all around extends,
High towering to the sky,
A pillar of beauty, that Nature sends
To salute the Spirit on high.

Thou noble type of the forest might,
That strengthens and grows with time,
In the summer day and the winter night
Still green in every clime !
Thy life may well to my soul impart
A lesson from Nature's page :
As sound and as pure should be my heart,
As stately my sinking age !

What tales could thy mossy branches tell
Of the days that are no more !
Of the fate which that noble race befell
Who roamed in these woods of yore !
What lovers have sighed in thy silent shade !
What captives were bound to thee !
What bones in the earth beneath thee laid,
Where the Indian wandered free !

Thy lofty column, too, soon will fall,
For the white man's axe is near ;
Thy beauty and power will perish all,
When man shall have stolen here.
This silent wood shall a city be,
Ere another age has come ;
The sun that has warmed and nurtured thee
Shall brighten a human home.

But even in death shall thy virtue shine,
For the tanner will seek the aid
Of thy life-blood, richer than rosy wine
From the purple berry made.
The PRATTS of the land — a noble race —
Will come to this green old wood ;
And the tanner's village shall mark the place
Where the hemlock forest stood.

THE TANNER OF PRATTSVILLE.

THE towers of Prattsville proudly rise
Close by to the dark old wood.
Her spires ascend to the azure skies,
Where the hemlock tree once stood.

The tanner who built this vast domain,
In the home of the wild and free,
Has raised a city upon the plain,
By the aid of the hemlock tree.

The church he erected where foxes prowled,
By the river's verdant side ;
The school-house he placed where the wild wolf howled,
And the hunter's bullet defied.

The children of science have hither come,
The fruit of his toil to see ;
He has given to learning and art a home,
By the bark of the hemlock tree !

Ten thousand acres his toil has cleared ;
And a million sides has tanned,
While a worthy name he has nobly reared
In the councils of the land.

He has ever wrought for his country's good,
Wherever that good might be ;
And his only aid was the bark and the blood
Of the mighty hemlock tree.

And he loves its lofty, towering form,
And its ever glossy green ;
Like him, it has stood through many a storm,
And winter days has seen.

In his life he has built him a happy home
In the hemlock's grateful shade ;
And he hopes, when the day of death shall come,
To be under its branches laid.

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CHRONOLOGICAL SYNOPSIS OF THE LIFE OF ZADOK PRATT.

1790, Oct. 30. Born at Stephentown, Rensselaer county, New York, and in his early days worked with his father at tanning, at Middleburgh, Schoharie county, N. Y.

1802. Removed to Windham (now Lexington), Greene county, N. Y.

1810. Apprenticed to Luther Hays, a saddler, in Durham.

1811. Worked at his trade a year as a journeyman saddler, at ten dollars a month.

1812. Commenced business on his own account, in Lexington, as a saddler, working from fourteen to sixteen hours a day. He commenced keeping an inventory, which he ever practised afterwards during life.

1814. Establishes a store, in addition to his saddlery.

1814. Went as a soldier for the defence of New York city, then menaced by the fleets of the enemy; while there, he resists the corruption of the commissary, and forces him to do justice to the soldiers.

1815. Sells out his stock in trade, and is fortunate in escaping loss from the commercial revulsion which followed the peace; forms a partnership with his two brothers in tanning.

1818, Oct. 18. Is married to Miss Beda Dickerman, of Hampden, Conn., who died 19th April, 1819.

1818, December. Makes a voyage by sea to Charleston, S. C.; sea-sick going, and sea-sick coming; learned enough of sea-faring life.

1821, April 21. Unanimously chosen captain in the fifth regiment of New York State Artillery, and uniforms the company at his own expense.

1821. In the winter of this year makes an excursion to Canada, with leather, for the purchase of furs, during which he encamps in the woods upon the snow.

1822, July 12. Is unanimously elected colonel of the 116th regiment of infantry of the State of New York.

1823. Is married to his second wife, Miss Esther Dickerman, sister to his first wife; she died 22d April, 1826.

1824. Is appointed justice of the peace for the county of Greene.

1824, Oct. 6. Received a vote of thanks from the Presbytery at Lexington, for a donation of one hundred dollars in aid of the missionary cause.

1825. Built his great tannery in the woods of Windham, where has since grown up under his auspices the flourishing town of Prattsville.

1825. Commands the escort of Gen. Lafayette into Catskill.

1826, Sept. 4. Resigns his commission as colonel of militia to the governor of the state.

1827, Oct. 12. Is married to his third wife, Miss Abigail P. Watson, daughter of Wheeler Watson, Esq., of Rensselaer; she died Feb. 5, 1834.

1827. Is elected supervisor of the town of Windham.

1835, March 16. Married his fourth wife, Miss Mary E. Watson, sister of his third consort.

1835. Receives the thanks of the Delaware Circuit for the donation of a lot of ground for the use of the elder of that Circuit.

1836, March. Builds a bridge over Schoharie-kill, one hundred and thirty feet long, the snow three feet deep in the woods, in eleven days, without the use of ardent spirits.

1836, November. Is elected a representative in Congress from the Eighth Congressional District of New York. At the same election was chosen one of the electors of president and vice-president from New York.

1836, May 8. Vote of thanks from the board of stewards of the Methodist Church, for lot and house for their minister.

1837, Sept. 4. Takes his seat in Congress at the extra session, called by Mr. Van Buren.

1837, Sept. 4. Is appointed one of the standing committee on the militia.

1837, October. Receives the silver medal of the New York

Institute, being the first ever granted to a tanner for the best specimen of hemlock-tanned sole-leather.

1837, Dec. 11. Is appointed one of the standing committee on public buildings and grounds.

1838, March 11. Moved a resolution in favor of the reduction of postage, thus originating a great and favorite measure, which has proved of such vast benefit to the United States.

1838, March 12. Presented the resolution of the State of New York, and submitted a resolution providing for procuring foreign seeds and plants, to be distributed gratuitously to the farmers of the United States, through the medium of the Patent Office, to benefit the farming interests.

1838, April 4. Offered a resolution, in Congress, directing portraits of the five first presidents to be executed by American artists, and placed in the executive mansion. Not adopted.

1838, July 4. Publishes an address to his constituents, partially reviewing the proceedings in Congress, and declining a reëlection.

1839, Jan. 14. Moved a resolution that the Committee of Ways and Means be instructed to report a bill directing the Secretary of the Treasury to furnish blanks to enable all banks to make uniform returns, throughout the country.

1839, Jan. 28. Moved a resolution of inquiry respecting the material of which the public buildings at Washington are constructed.

1839, Feb. 25. Presented a report on the quality of the materials used in constructing the public buildings at Washington, concluding with a resolution that the material hereafter used for that purpose shall be of the most durable kind — either marble or granite. At the same time, he submitted a plan and estimates for the new General Post-office,—and that building, the finest in Washington, has since been erected of marble, according to his plan.

1839, March 1. Delivers a speech, in the House of Representatives, on the subject of constructing a Dry Dock at Brooklyn; embracing statistics on commerce, navigation, imports and exports of bullion for ten years.

1839. Moved the bill for establishing a Branch Mint in the city of New York.

1839, July 4. Delivers an oration at Prattsville.

1839, September. Was elected a member of the American Institute.

1839, Oct. 25. Offers five thousand dollars to endow an academy in Prattsville, on condition that the like sum be raised by any Christian denomination.

1842, November. Is chosen a representative in Congress from the Eleventh Congressional District of New York.

1842, Dec. 29. Delivers an address before the Mechanics' Society at Catskill, of which he was a member.

1843, Dec. 11. Appointed chairman of Committee on Public Buildings.

1843. Establishes a bank at Prattsville, with one hundred thousand dollars capital, wholly secured by six and seven per cent. stocks of the United States and State of New York; its bills kept at par in the city of New York.

1844, Jan. 3. Offers a resolution providing for uniform annual returns of banks; suitable forms to be furnished by the Secretary of the Treasury, in order that a more perfect system might be adopted for the benefit of the community. He offered a similar resolution, 1839.

1844, Jan. 8. Moved an amendment to the resolution in favor of the remission of the fine upon Gen. Jackson, to place on record the fact that fifteen out of seventeen millions of the inhabitants of the United States had so instructed their delegations in Congress.

1844, Jan. 12. Gives notice of offering a bill for establishing a Branch Mint at New York. Same day, gave notice for bill amending naturalization laws,—which were afterwards presented.

1844, Jan. 17. Presented the resolutions of the Legislature of the State of New York, to remit the fine of Gen Jackson.

1844, Jan. 29. Moved the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the expediency of establishing a Bureau of Statistics and Commerce, in connection with the Secretary of the Treasury. Is appointed chairman of said committee.

1844, January. Elected president of the Greene County Agricultural Society.

1844, February. Was on board the Princeton at the time of the explosion of its great gun, when Messrs. Upshur, Gilmer, and others, were killed.

1844, March 7. Makes a report on the application of the citizens of Washington to have a clock furnished at the public expense.

1844, March 7. Makes a report on the situation, cost, &c., of the public buildings and grounds, and expenditures of the presidential mansion.

1844, March 8. Submits a report, as chairman of the select committee on the Bureau of Statistics and Commerce, with valuable tables, showing the loans and discounts of the banks; imports and exports, and balance of trade, for a series of years, of our government with other nations; illustrating the importance of the proposed measure, and concluding with a bill to provide for the collection of national statistics.

1844, March 18. Moved resolution respecting care and management of the furnaces used to heat the halls and rooms of the capitol.

1844, April 12. Offers a joint resolution for the appropriation of the public ground for a national monument.

1844, April 12. Reported bill for an addition of a wing to the Patent Office.

1844, April 12. Makes additional report on the plan submitted by him for fire-proof buildings for the War and Navy Departments.

1844, May 2. Mr. Pratt, from the Committee on the Public Buildings, made an adverse report upon the resolution of the House of the 25th of March last, in relation to changing the Congress Library Room into a Hall of Representatives.

1844, May 15. Moved joint resolution authorizing the transfer of certain clerks in the Treasury Department to perform the duties of the Bureau of Statistics, agreeably to the report of the select committee on that subject,—which resolution was adopted.

1844, May 24. Makes report, with plan and estimates, on the proposed change of the Hall and Library of the House of Representatives.

1844, May 25. Makes report on the expenditures in the District of Columbia, from the foundation of the government, showing an expenditure exceeding ten millions of dollars.

1844, May 25. Makes report on the Monument Square, submitting a plan, diagram and drawing for a national monument to Washington.

1844, May 25. Moved joint resolution requiring an inventory, once in two years, of all public property to be returned from all persons having any in charge, in order that public officers and legislators might have a more perfect knowledge of the property in charge of the government.

1844, May 25. Made report, accompanied with a joint resolution providing for the laying out and fencing the Monument Square.

1844, June 5. Offers joint resolution providing for the mode of making returns of public property in possession of officers of the government.

1844, June 7. Moved a joint resolution for the preparing and distribution of the national medals to the state libraries, colleges and academies.

1844, June 7. Moved resolution providing that monuments hereafter erected to deceased members of Congress should be constructed of marble, instead of sandstone, heretofore used.

1844, June 7. Moved a resolution directing the Topographical Bureau to cause a plan of the city of Washington, and views of the capitol and public buildings, to be engraved, and copies to be sent, as presents, by ministers and consuls, to foreign courts, translated into their languages.

1844, June 15. Resolution adopted, on his motion, providing for the collection of statistics on the plan of the bureau submitted in his report of the 8th of March.

1844, June 17. Makes report on the errors in the sixth census.

1844, Aug. 29. The Democratic Convention in Greene county passed "a vote of thanks to Col. Pratt for his public services, and untiring devotion to the business of the present session of Congress, — giving an account of his numerous public acts."

1844, Dec. 4. Moved a resolution authorizing the Secretary of

War to loan marquees and tents to state agricultural societies for their fairs.

1844, Dec. 26. Introduced joint resolution providing for periodical renewals and greater security of bonds of public officers.

1844, Dec. 31. Moved joint resolution providing for the selection of a site for the National Washington Monument.

1844, Dec. 31. Makes report on the necessity of providing additional buildings for the accommodation of the War and Navy Departments.

1845, Jan. 10. Reports bill providing for the painting, repairing, &c., of the presidential mansion, and other public buildings.

1845, Jan. 11. Received vote of thanks from the Washington Monument Society, for his untiring exertions in their behalf, and for the plan and map by him submitted.

1845, Jan. 28. Offers joint resolution for the preservation of flags and other trophies taken in battle.

1845, Jan. 28. Makes report on national trophies, accompanied with the above resolution.

1845, Jan. 28. Makes report, with plans and drawings and estimates for the War and Navy Departments, accompanied with bill.

1845, Jan. 28. With introductory remarks, presents the memorial of Asa Whitney, on the importance of a national railroad to the Pacific.

1845, Jan. 28. Submits reports on the ventilation of the Representatives' Hall, and to prevent the echo so much complained of by speakers.

1845, Feb. 7. Submits additional report on the importance of a Statistical Bureau, accompanied with a joint resolution for the establishment of the same.

1845, Feb. 15. Submits proposition for the extension of American commerce, and proposing a mission to Corea and Japan, a people of over seventy millions, with whom we have no communication, and whose ports our ships are not allowed to enter.

1845, Feb. 19. Presents a memorial from forty-seven editors and authors, in favor of placing magazines and periodicals on the

same footing with newspapers, as respects mail privileges, in furtherance of his plan of providing for a cheap and uniform postage.

1845, Feb. 21. Moved resolution for the appointment of three commissioners to investigate the public departments and bureaux at Washington, with a view to a better organization, and an equalization of duties and salaries of public officers.

1845. Moved estimates and plan for erecting dwellings for the five heads of departments, opposite the presidential mansion.

1845, Feb. 25. Makes report on the statistics of the United States; the population, revenue, production; and showing the relative condition of the Northern and Southern States.

1845, Feb. 25. Makes a report on the national edifices at Washington.

1845, February. Moved that three commissioners be appointed, whose duty it shall be, during the recess of Congress, to examine into all the departments in the various offices of government, with the view of remodelling said departments, for the purpose of equalizing salaries and duties.

1845, Feb. 26. Reports a bill for amendment of the naturalization laws.

1845, Feb. 27. Moved an amendment to the general appropriation bill, providing for the survey, under direction of the Secretary of War, of a railroad route from Lake Michigan to the south pass of the Rocky Mountains, to Oregon.

1845, Feb. 28. Moved a bill respecting the Smithsonian Institute, the substance of which has since become a law, providing that a portion of the income of the Smithsonian fund should be appropriated for the improvement of agriculture and the mechanic arts.

1845, March 3. Makes report on the salaries of all the officers employed at Washington, showing the amount received by each, and the states from which they were appointed.

1845, March 3. Makes report on the duties upon imports and tonnage and revenue, by states, showing the amount collected each year, from the foundation of the government.

1845, March 3. Makes report on a proposed new mode of taking the yeas and nays in the House, by machinery connected with the speaker's table.

1845, March 5. In an address to his constituents, reviewing his acts while in Congress, and giving an account of his stewardship, he declines a reelection to Congress.

1845, June. Receives thanks of the Greene County Agricultural Society for a donation of two hundred and fifty dollars, for the promotion of agriculture and the mechanic arts.

1845, July 1. Is elected an honorary member of the Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania (in the city of Philadelphia), for the promotion of the mechanic arts.

1845, Sept. 25. Delivers an address before the Greene County Agricultural Society, of which he was president.

1845. Offers resolution providing for the engraving of patents, and their distribution to every town and county and public library in the United States, for the benefit of mechanics, to whom those inestimable plans are now like a sealed book.

1845. Offers a resolution providing for the execution of busts, by native artists, of all the presidents, to be placed in the capitol.

1845. Moves a bill providing for the establishment of the free banking system in the District of Columbia, similar to the free banking law of New York.

1845. Offers a resolution calling on the Secretary of State to furnish the statistics of Texas, pending her admission into the Union.

1845. Received of the N. Y. State Agricultural Society a diploma for the best specimen of hemlock-tanned sole-leather.

1846. Closed the concerns of his tannery at Prattsville.

1846. Is elected a corresponding member of the American Agricultural Association.

1847. Elected honorary member of the Louisiana State Agricultural and Mechanics' Association.

1847, March. With a view of acquiring, from personal observation, a practical knowledge of the peculiar institutions of the south, as compared with those of the north, makes a tour with his son, then a lad of eighteen, through the whole of the southern and south-western states.

1847, Aug. 28. Addresses a letter to the people of the United

States on the importance of a railroad across the continent to the Pacific Ocean.

1847, Sept. 23. Delivers an address at the dedication of the Spencertown Academy.

1847, Nov. 22. Receives thanks from Spencertown Academy, for a liberal donation.

1847, Nov. 27. Writes a communication in answer to an inquiry of the American Institute, explaining the system of the Prattsville tannery, of its management, and the extent of its operations.

1848, Jan. 4. Delivers a lecture before the Mercantile Library Association of the city of Hudson.

1848, Jan. 4. At the annual meeting of the Greene County Agricultural Society, held at Cairo, it was *Resolved*, That the thanks of the Greene County Agricultural Society be tendered to the Hon. Zadok Pratt, late president, for his valuable services and able superintendence of the affairs of the said society; and also *Resolved*, That the thanks of the said society be presented to Hon. Zadok Pratt for his liberal donations in sustaining and carrying out the measures and objects of said society.

1848, Jan. 14. Received the thanks of the Greene County Baptist Missionary Society, for donation.

1848. Makes the third annual report to the N. Y. State Agricultural Society, as president of the Greene County Agricultural Society, giving the geological, agricultural and commercial statistics of the county of Greene.

1848, March 7. Is elected a corresponding member of the New York Historical Society.

1848, July 23. Received the honorary degree of Master of Arts from Union College; the first instance in this state of a similar honor conferred upon a self-taught mechanic.

1849, Jan. 2. Elected president of the Mechanics' Institute of the city of New York.

1849, Jan. 16. Delivers an address on his inauguration as president of the Mechanics' Institute, City Hall, New York.

1850, July. The stone-cutters of Washington voted a block of

marble to be made a part of the Washington Monument, in honor of him, as the working-man of Congress.

1850, Sept. 20. Appointed by the Governor of New York on the committee of arrangements in respect to the World's Fair, to take place in London, 1851.

1851, Feb. 25. Appointed a delegate to the World's Fair, by the Mechanics' Institute, New York.

1851, Sept. 23. Elected honorary member of the Mechanics' Association, Baltimore, Md.

1852. Elected delegate to the Democratic Convention to meet at Baltimore, in June, to nominate candidates for President and Vice-president of the United States.

